# A SERMON ON ALMS.

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THE THIRD EDITION.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY GEORGE CAW.
SOLD BY BELL & BRADFUTE, AND J. DICKSON.

M.DCC.XCV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

# PREFACE.

TO this edition notes are added. The ſubject is ſuited to the times. Revolutions of property, frequent ſudden and entire, admoniſh the preſent proprietors of wealth to lay a good foundation for the time to come. Internal defence is promoted by voluntary aſſeſſments for armament; and it would be further promoted by ſimilar aſſeſſments for the families of ſoldiers, for the poor who have many children, or other works of charity. Pamphlets and ſermons inſtruct the people in the duty of ſubjection; benevolent exertions convince them that the commandment is not grievous. There is room for progreſs both in the theory and practice of humanity; and to this ſtudy the rich are at preſent called, as by a voice from heaven.

# PREFACE.

A

# SERMON ON ALMS.

LUKE xi. 41.

BUT RATHER GIVE ALMS OF SUCH THINGS AS YOU HAVE, AND BEHOLD ALL THINGS ARE CLEAN UNTO YOU.

THERE is an order in giving.

1. A man muſt provide for his own, and ſupply the wants of his children, in preference to others; nor ſhould a child beſtow on any, who are leſs nearly connected, what his parents need. The firſt thought of a dutiful child, when he has any thing to ſpare, is, Do my parents need it? If they do, God's law is written on the heart, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother.*

2. Poor brothers and ſiſters have the next claim. Among children of the ſame family, there ought to be a mutual attachment, tender

and inviolable; upon every proper occaſion, teſtimonies of it ſhould be given. While theſe are withheld from a brother or ſiſter that hath waxed poor, ſelf-approbation in relieving others is not entire.

3. Attend to the claim of gratitude. Favours received ſhould never be forgotten. Recollect thoſe to whom you have in any way been obliged or indebted. If any who inſtructed, or patroniſed, or aſſiſted, or conſoled you, be now in want; ſeize the opportunity of teſtifying your gratitude: to neglect it, will be matter of reproach and ſelf-condemnation. They who have been beneficent, though not to us, are entitled to ſympathy in diſtreſs: it is co-operating with Providence to ſhew mercy to the merciful.

4. Is your friend reduced to ſtraits? Call to mind the mutual confidence, and ſympathies, and endearments by which your hearts were united. They who paint friendſhip in ſtrong colours, ſpeak of it as rendering all things common. Though this idea is not to be realized, yet he who heſitates to open his heart, and his hand, in the day of adverſity, deſerves not the name of Friend. Enquire if the friend of your youth

has

has any children in want, and extend your friendly regards to them.

5. Poor relations, though diſtant, ſhould be acknowledged. To prevent one of them from becoming a charge on the public, is better than to beſtow the ſame ſum on promiſcuous charity. "If any man or woman that believeth have wi-"dows, let them relieve them, and let not the "church be charged; that it may relieve them "that are widows indeed."* A needy man is referred to his rich relations, and often left to their bounty: though a prodigal, he is an object of compaſſion; and it is a blemiſh on the character of his rich relation not to ſhew it.

6. Servants fallen into poverty ſhould be remembered by thoſe whom they have ſerved long and faithfully, and it is pleaſant to be able to relieve them. A man of wealth and benevolence might extend his view of this relation: Seafaring men are employed in the ſervice of the merchant; the hands employed by a manufacturer work for his profit; tenants labour, and their landlords reap the fruit: ſuch as are diſabled or worn out in theſe ſervices awaken compaſſion in



* 1 Tim. v. 16.

a Chriſtian maſter. The relation of maſter and ſervant, once a ſyſtem of ſlavery and oppreſſion, is transformed by Chriſtianity into a law of liberty and a bond of love.

7. Neighbourhood is a relation which affords opportunities of indulging compaſſion with effect. The poor, who are daily under our eye, and whoſe ſtraits we know, excite our ſympathy. It becomes neceſſary, for the eaſe of our own minds, to do ſomething for them. A little does them good. They are thankful for a little. The crumbs from our table may be a meal to them; our fire may warm them; and the clothes which we have uſed may clothe them. Teach your children compaſſion to poor neighbours, and employ them in works of mercy.

## SECT. II.

SYMPATHY, if indulged, will ſuggeſt many objects of compaſſion.

1. The man who lives in proſperity, and reflects on the changeableneſs of it, will ſympathize with the unfortunate who have ſeen better days, and be diſpoſed to relieve them with that liberality

lity and delicacy which he himſelf would expect, were his riches to make to themſelves wings, and flee away.

2. They who have riſen from a low eſtate, might look back on the pit from whence they were digged, and feel for thoſe who are yet labouring in it. Having known in their own experience, the hardſhip and ſtruggles and repulſes which a poor man has to meet with, they can take a kindlier intereſt in his concerns; they are qualified to direct and aſſiſt him.

3. They who have "known the heart of a "ſtranger," and met with kindneſs when far from their friends, are prompted by the memory of what they felt, to enquire after the friendleſs ſtranger, and to comfort him. "Love ye there-"fore the ſtranger, for ye were ſtrangers in the "land of Egypt." *

4. The man who has ſuffered bondage, in all its horrors, remembers thoſe that are in bonds, as bound with them; he becomes their zealous compaſſionate friend and interceſſor. Mr Howard was a priſoner in France; and to his ſuf-

 ferings

* Deut. x. 19.

ferings there he aſcribes his benevolent labours.

5. Dr Swift felt the approach of lunacy, and founded an hoſpital for lunatics. Upon a late intereſting cauſe of joy, the public thankſgiving to God was proper: had ſome correſponding work of mercy been added, in behalf of the poor under mental diſorder; it would have ſalted the ſacrifice.

6. People in good circumſtances, who are viſited with diſeaſe, and who feel how painful it is, amidſt all the comfort which friends, and attendants, and medicines, and cordials can give, are led to feel for poor neighbours under the ſame viſitation, and to ſend thoſe aids and comforts which a ſickbed needs, but which poverty cannot reach.

7. Widows who have friends, and guardians to their children, and a liberal proviſion, might think of thoſe who are *widows indeed*. While your hearts ſink, and the ſhadow of death darkens your remaining comforts, you can ſympathize with the joyleſs deſponding ſpirit of one who is left with children poor and friendleſs.

By

By alleviating her ſorrows, you alleviate your own.

8. They who were orphans from their early years, look back with a ſympathizing heart on thoſe who follow in the ſame dark defenceleſs path. While we remember with gratitude friends whom Providence raiſed up to take us by the hand, and bring us forward, we are happy to become inſtruments under the ſame Providence of befriending the friendleſs, and being the orphan's ſtay.

9. Children of the Clergy who are now in affluence, when they call to remembrance the economy of their Father's houſe, and the difficulty of their early ſteps, and their anxious forebodings, will ſympathize with children to whom the ſame lot is fallen, and promote the inſtitutions lately formed to aſſiſt them.

10. They who are entering unconnected into the vale of years, might ſympathize with ſuch as are farther advanced into that vale, in the ſame unconnected lonely ſtate, and beſtow the attention, and kindneſs, and care which they themſelves may ſhortly need.

11. The

11. The aged, who have of this world's goods, and who nevertheleſs feel the burden of declining health, and fading faculties, of melancholy, and fear, and pain, ſhould ſympathize with aged neighbours under the additional load of poverty. The poor man, whoſe arm can no longer earn bread, neglected and forſaken in his days of darkneſs, attracts compaſſion from the rich, whoſe feet are alſo *ſtumbling on the dark mountains*. It is becoming in the old who are rich, to ſhew kindneſs to the old who are poor, to viſit, and converſe with, and conſole them; to aſſociate with their remaining fellow-travellers in the contemplation of ſerious and everlaſting things, to anticipate that equalizing period when the rich and the poor ſhall meet together.

12. The young, who now enjoy plenty, are ſuſceptible of compaſſion. Open your eyes, my young hearers, on thoſe of your own age who are now begging their bread in rags. Thank GOD that you are not in their caſe. Pity their hardſhips. Deny yourſelves, to relieve them. This will give you pleaſure. It will defend you from the pleaſures of ſin. You will grow in favour with GOD and men. When you yourſelves ſtand in need of mercy, you ſhall obtain it.

SECT.

## SECT. III.

COMPASSION is early and deeply implanted; but without proper culture, it will grow irregular and fruitleſs, and in the end be ſupplanted by covetouſneſs.

1. Compaſſion, improperly cultivated, ſprings up into uſeleſs ſenſibility. The pleaſure which attends it, ſoothes and deceives the heart. An intereſting account of human wretchedneſs, excites pleaſurable ſympathetic emotions: The tongue utters kind wiſhes, "Be ye clothed, be "ye warmed;" and the heart exults in virtuous ſenſibility. But, to enter the dwelling of the wretched; to examine debts, and wants, and diſeaſes; to endure lothſome ſights and ſmells, within the ſphere of infection; to give time, and thought, and hands, and money—this is the ſubſtance, not the ſhadow of virtue: the pleaſure of ſenſibility may be leſs, but ſo is the danger of ſelf-deceit which attends it. Death-beds, in the page of an eloquent writer, delight the imagination; but they who are moſt delighted, are not the firſt to viſit a dying neighbour, to watch and miniſter

miniſter, to ſuggeſt a pious thought, and conſole the parting ſpirit. They often encompaſs the altar of virtue, but not to ſacrifice.

2. Extreme ſenſibility is a diſeaſed ſtate of the mind. It unfits us to relieve the miſerable, and tempts us to turn away. The ſight of pain is ſhunned, and the thought of it ſuppreſſed; the ear is ſtopped againſt the cry of indigence; the houſe of mourning is paſſed by; even near friends are abandoned, when ſick, to the nurſe and phyſician, and when dead, to thoſe who mourn for hire; and all this under pretence of fine feeling, and delicate ſenſibility, and a tender heart. The apples of Sodom are miſtaken for the fruit of Paradiſe.

3. Compaſſion may fall on the wrong object, and yet be juſtified and applauded. One living in affluence bcomes bankrupt; his ſudden fall ſtrikes the imagination, pity is felt, and generous exertions are made in his behalf; if artful and fraudulent, he foreſaw, and availed himſelf of, this irregular compaſſion; he ſtretched his credit, bought and built, and lived luxurioufly, that his fall might ſtrike the more. There is indeed a call for compaſſion; but, upon whom? doubtleſs

leſs upon the trader and artificer whoſe œconomy he has deranged, upon the ſervant who entruſted him with wages in an evil hour, upon the widow whom he has cauſed to weep over deſtitute children, and to curſe him in the bitterneſs of her ſoul.

4. Alms given from the impulſe of compaſſion ſoon fail; like ſeed fallen on ſtony ground, they quickly ſpring, and as quickly wither. By repeated acts, the force of paſſive habits is diminiſhed. Impoſture provokes, oppoſition diſcourages, ingratitude grieves, time cools the heart, and covetouſneſs enters.

Reaſon, and a ſenſe of duty, ſhould be employed to regulate and aſſiſt compaſſion. Have you given alms to an impoſtor? It was nevertheleſs a kind affection to which you yielded; and the heart that was never impoſed upon in this way, is probably a hard one. Learn to examine the claims made on your compaſſion, not careleſsly to repel them. Have you met with ingratitude? The kindneſs you ſhewed was an act of religion; and the child of GOD embraces the opportunity of doing good, as the olive yields fruit in its ſeaſon, regardleſs of the hand that reaps it. Is your

good

good miſconſtrued and evil ſpoken of? Follow Jeſus through bad report as well as through good report. Is your plan of benevolence oppoſed and thwarted? Still you have the merit of right intention. From whatever quarter diſcouragements ariſe, "Be not weary in well-doing; in "due ſeaſon you ſhall reap, if you faint not."

## SECT. IV.

"TAKE heed and beware of covetouſneſs." We muſt take heed and beware leſt it lurk and work imperceptibly. *St Francis de Sales*, an eminent father confeſſor of the Roman church, obſerved, 'that none confeſs the ſin of covetouſneſs.' It is folded in ſelf-deceit, and cloaked with hypocriſy, more eaſily than any other ſin of the ſame magnitude. A man may ſtudy ſyſtems of univerſal, diſintereſted, abſtract benevolence, and ſpeculate on the excellencies of love, while he overlooks a poor woman with fatherleſs children who lives next door to him: a little kindneſs ſhewn to her, and a little done towards educating her children, and putting them in a way of earning bread, would be more in the ſpirit of Chriſtian charity, than to write books and ſing hymns in praiſe of it. A miſer may be free from ſcandalous ſins,

and

and thank GOD that he is no adulterer nor extortioner; he may have kept the commandments from his youth, and have no ſuſpicion that "one "thing is wanting;" he is ſound in the faith, and blinded by his zeal for orthodoxy; he attends the ordinances of religion, and the preachers voice is a pleaſant ſong, to which he liſtens, and about which he talks, while "his heart go-"eth after covetouſneſs."

If the duty of almſgiving be directly propoſed and urged, covetouſneſs is fruitful in excuſes.

1. *You pay what you owe, the reſt is your own; what you do with it, is nobody's concern.* But it is your own concern, for you muſt give an account of your ſtewardſhip to GOD.

2. *You have children to provide for, and can give no alms.*—Judge for yourſelf; only it is fit to exerciſe your judgment, to enquire if there be bounds in providing for a family, if alms be a kind of riches which lay a good foundation for the time to come, and whether your children are likely to profit moſt by the ſavings of avarice, or by the odour of a good name, and the bleſſing entailed by Providence on the ſeed of the merciful.

3. *You have family honours and poſſeſſions to repreſent and tranſmit; your buſineſs in the world is to preſerve and tranſmit them.*—Avarice takes hold of many handles; here it takes hold of family pride, and hides from your eye the true uſe of an eſtate, which is to enjoy and do good with it.

4. *You have a rank to keep up, and the revenue is barely ſufficient.*—It is eaſy to err in giving too much to ſhew: it is the worſt extreme; it diſguiſes avarice under the maſk of grandeur. While too much is given to ſhew, there is nothing left for compaſſion, not enough for decency, hardly enough for juſtice.

5. *You do not hoard, but live up to your income; and it does good to poor labourers, though not preciſely in the form of alms.*—This is ſo far well; but ſtill it is the defective character of the rich man in the parable, who was clothed in purple, and fared ſumptuouſly every day. He too could plead, that the furniſhing his fine cloth and ſumptuous fare gave bread to labourers, for it does not appear that he was an oppreſſor or unjuſt.

6. *The poor get enough from thoſe who are better able to give alms, and you have no occaſion to give.*

*give.*—Conſider the caſe of the poor, and you will find that they have not yet got enough; conſider the precept, and you will find that it extends to you. The obedience of others to this precept cannot juſtify your neglect, any more than their attendance upon public worſhip can diſpenſe with your's; it is your duty as well as theirs to be devout and to be charitable. Every man muſt prove his own work, that he may have rejoicing in himſelf alone. Alms are an integral part of the Chriſtian temper; and if you give no alms of ſuch things as you have, none of theſe things are clean unto you.

7. *Chriſtian alms ſhould be done in ſecret, and you love not to make a ſhew of them.*—A right principle may be turned into an excuſe for covetouſneſs. Is the proportion of your ſecret alms ſuch as the Scripture requires, as an impartial ſpectator who knows your circumſtances would approve, as your own mind approves in a ſerious hour? Your attendance in the Houſe of God may be aſcribed to hypocriſy, but this is not a reaſon to withdraw; your offering there may be aſcribed to vanity, but neither is this a reaſon to withhold it. If you be thought uncharitable by all who know you, and ſtand alone

in thinking otherwiſe, there is reaſon at leaſt to examine yourſelf with a particular eye to the operation of ſelf-deceit in the cauſe of covetouſneſs.

8. *You love not to hear of works, but thoſe which Chriſt has done, and imputes to believers by faith alone: you deſire to be clothed with a robe of his righteouſneſs, not with rotten rags of your own*—Unguarded expreſſions of controverſial divines are picked up, and perverted by the covetous. That "we are ſaved by grace, and it is "GOD who worketh in us to will and to do," are immutable conſoling truths; but upon them the obligation to good works is founded. "Work "out your ſalvation with fear and trembling, "*for* it is God which worketh in you*." Faith without works is dead. In whatever light alms be viewed, they are enjoined by an authority that claims obedience. Call them fruits, or evidences, or concomitants, or what you will, ſtill they are neceſſary. EVERY ONE SHALL RECEIVE ACCORDING TO THE DEEDS DONE IN THE BODY. Can words be plainer, or ſtronger, or more intereſting? Deeds of kindneſs to the poor will be rewarded: they ſhall have judgment without mercy,

* Phil. ii, 12, 13.

mercy, who have ſhewed no mercy. Theſe are truths of GOD. If you pervert their obvious meaning, you have reaſon to ſuſpect your own hearts of an *evil covetouſneſs*.

9. *Almſgiving belongs to the rich; and if ever you get riches, you will be charitable. The reproof of covetouſneſs may be juſt, but it likewiſe belongs to the rich; and if ever you get riches, you will guard againſt it.*—By the *rich*, you mean thoſe who have more than you; but are there not many who think your income a rich one, with which much good might be done? Unleſs you give alms of ſuch things as you have, and do the good you can, additional wealth would make you no better. The ſin of covetouſneſs, and the ſpirit of alms, may be found in a low eſtate. Affections may fix on a cottage, or a little field; the heart may cling to a ſmall ſum; for a meſs of pottage the birthright that is deſpiſed may be ſold. The ſpirit of alms may be found in a cottage with the widow whoſe poſſeſſion is two mites; with the labourer who ſpares part of his wages to thoſe who cannot labour; with the friendly hand that reaches a cup of cold water to the thirſty. It is the mind which GOD regards; and "if there be firſt a willing mind,

"every one is accepted according to what he hath "received, not according to what he hath not "received."

It may be thought uſeleſs labour to reaſon with the covetous about alms. I know it will have little effect on them; but it may inſtruct the young, whoſe hearts are not yet hardened; it may guard the well-diſpoſed againſt ſophiſtry and ſelf-deceit; it may determine the ſervant who wavers in his choice of a maſter betwixt GOD and Mammon. One end of preaching the Goſpel to every creature is FOR A TESTIMONY in the cauſe of virtue againſt all unrighteouſneſs of men, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

PART

# PART SECOND.

## SECT. I.

MEANS ſhould be uſed to maintain a charitable, in oppoſition to a worldly mind. To worldly-mindedneſs there are daily temptations: It ſhould be our daily ſtudy to reſiſt and overcome them. Think often on the motives to charity, as they are propoſed with ſimplicity and energy in the word of GOD. Attend to the motive in the text: "Give alms of ſuch things as "you have, and all things are clean unto you*." When CHRIST ſpake theſe words, he was ſitting at dinner with a Phariſee who had invited him. The Phariſee marvelled that he had not firſt waſhed before dinner, and the Lord ſaid unto him, "Now do ye Phariſees make clean the "outſide of the cup and platter, but your inward "part is full of ravening and wickedneſs." With an outſide religion you think to conceal covetous and cruel hearts. "Ye fools, did not "he which made that which is without, alſo "make that which is within?" Much of your religion

* Note A.

religion conſiſts in ceremonial waſhings: "Ra-
"ther give alms of ſuch things as you have,
"and behold all things are clean unto you."
Liſten to the Law of Moſes, which ye make of
none effect by your traditions: "Every third
"year thou ſhalt give the tithe of all thine in-
"creaſe to the Levite, the ſtranger, the father-
"leſs, and the widow, that the LORD thy GOD
"may bleſs thee." Would you enjoy content-
ment and ſatisfaction and comfort in the uſe of
what you have, give alms. Bleſſings are multi-
plied on the head of him that giveth. He has
the promiſe of this life, and of that which is to
come.

Amidſt thy abundance, liſten to the voice of
God. "Is it not to deal thy bread to the hun-
"gry, and that thou bring the poor that are caſt
"out to thy houſe? when thou ſeeſt the naked
"that thou cover him, and that thou hide not
"thyſelf from thine own fleſh? Then ſhall thy
"light break forth as the morning, and thine
"health ſhall ſpring forth ſpeedily: thy righte-
"ouſneſs ſhall go before thee, and the glory of
"the LORD ſhall be thy rere-ward. Then ſhalt
"thou call, and the LORD will anſwer; thou
"ſhalt cry, and he ſhall ſay, Here I am." Con-
ſcious

ſcious goodneſs is the light of the mind; you taſte the bleſſedneſs of giving, and your prayers are heard. "If thou draw out thy ſoul to the "hungry, and ſatisfy the afflicted ſoul, then "ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy dark-"neſs as the noon-day." In the obſcurity of old age, the light of remembrance ſhall ariſe; in the darkneſs of affliction, there ſhall be a noon-day of hope.

The rich who are diſeaſed, and ſuch as get riches in their old age, find little pleaſure in them, except as an inſtrument of good: but when ſo uſed, they enable the poſſeſſor, from the retirement of old age, and even from a bed of ſickneſs, to diſpenſe manifold bleſſings.

Wealth does not exempt from care. There are croſſes and conſtraints and diſquietudes in a high eſtate, from which the heart finds refuge in the indulgence of compaſſion. Fenelon obſerved, that 'riches are valuable, not ſo much for the 'honours, as for the croſſes which attend them:' And Madam Maintenon, amidſt the emptineſs of royal honours, found comfort to her heart by filling it with the concerns of deſtitute children.

Riches

Riches do not avert the ſtroke of affliction. Children who ſhould inherit them may be removed by death. The world with its good things then ſeems a void. For whom have we laboured and bereaved our ſouls of reſt? Whoſe ſhall all theſe things be?—"Honour the LORD "with your ſubſtance." Open your hearts to the comfort of immortality, and ſeek for it by a patient continuance in good works.

The rich may be under trouble of mind and religious melancholy. Perhaps the ſecret cauſes of your troubled conſcience, which you have not yet been able or willing to develope, are an idle life, the love of pleaſure, forgetting to do good. This is the interpretation of thoſe bitter things which GOD writes againſt you. They are his call to awake from ſloth, to do good, and to communicate. Active goodneſs diſpels the gloom of indolence. Sympathy with real, obliterates imaginary evils. Relief and comfort, flowing from your hand, reflect peaceful and pleaſant thoughts. The ſoul returns to its reſt. Whatever your guilt has been, charity ſmoothes the way to penitence and peace "through the blood "of ſprinkling." Wherefore let my counſel be acceptable to thee. Break off thy ſins by righteouſneſs,

ouſneſs, and thine iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor.

'I have ever obſerved,' ſays Father Bourdaloue, 'that the rich who open their hearts in 'liberal and tender mercy to the poor, get *grace*, 'while the covetous die in their ſins.' The moſt liberal alms will not juſtify the indulgence of a known ſin, but they may prove the firſt ſtep of repentance: they looſen the band of ſelfiſhneſs, and aſſimilate the ſoul to GOD, in whom compaſſions flow. One virtue carried high, often draws others in its train, and leads on to perfection. Charity to the poor is intimately connected with the two radical virtues, love to GOD and love to our neighbour. It appears by comparing Scripture with Scripture, that, "Be "ye merciful as your Father in heaven is mer-"ciful *," is a precept of the ſame import with, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven "is perfect †."

SECT.

* Luke vi. 36. † Mat. v. 48.

## SECT. II.

"BLESSED is he that conſidereth the poor." And upon how many ſubjects do we turn our thoughts, to the conſideration of which no bleſſing is annexed?

The caſe of the poor requires conſideration.

1. To employ ſuch as can work, and pay them punctually, is ſerving them not a little. It delivers them from ſloth, renders them uſeful, and awakens the ſenſe of independence. In plans for employing wealth, a kind conſideration of the poor might enter, and a predilection for the plan moſt extenſively uſeful to them. It is worthy of a Chriſtian who has of this world's goods, to deviſe plans for employing the idle, giving habits of induſtry to the young, and delivering the old from languor and dependence, by labours ſuited to their years.

THOMAS FIRMIN, citizen of London, a name conſecrated to humanity, among other memorable labours of love, erected a warehouſe for employing the idle. To many hundreds he furniſhed

niſhed materials for work, and purchaſed the produce, accounting the loſs ſuſtained in the diſpoſal of it to be gain. He laid up coals and corn, to enſure them in dearth againſt cold and hunger. He diſtributed a Scripture Catechiſm, to inſtruct them in pure religion. 'He valued 'this catechiſm, becauſe it is wholly in the words 'of Scripture, favours no particular party or per-'ſuaſion, and therefore is of general uſe: the aim 'of the judicious author being to inſtruct the 'young and the ignorant, in what all parties a-'gree is neceſſary to be believed and done; leaving 'it to others to engage them in controverſies and 'debates *.' Thus wiſely conſidering the caſe of the poor, of their bodies, and of their ſouls; he honoured the LORD with his ſubſtance, and left an example of judicious alms which by many might be imitated on a ſmaller ſcale. To reſcue one family, or even one perſon, from idleneſs and want, is a benefit of public as well as private uſefulneſs.

Here, by the way, let the poor, who are induſtrious and honeſt and content, take comfort. You fill up your place in ſociety, and ſerve your generation, and glorify GOD on earth,



* Life of Thomas Firmin, p. 44.

more than the rich who are idle. At the great day of retribution, reſpect will be had, not to rank which is aſſigned by Providence, but to fidelity in the rank aſſigned us. "Then, many "which are firſt ſhall be laſt, and the laſt ſhall "be firſt."

2. Conſider the poor who cannot work.

Of ſuch there is always a proportion. "The "poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the land." Except in caſes of extreme neceſſity, a diſtinction ſhould be made. "Let not a widow be taken "into the number under threeſcore years, ha-"ving been the wife of one man, well reported "of for good works: if ſhe have brought up "children, if ſhe have lodged ſtrangers, if ſhe "have waſhed the ſaints feet, if ſhe have relie-"ved the afflicted, if ſhe have followed every "good work." If ſuch a one be left childleſs, and deſolate in old age, "truſting in GOD, and "continuing in prayer," let her find in the bounty of the faithful, that her truſt is not vain, that her prayer is heard. The poor, who have been honeſt and laborious, and peaceable, and kindly affectioned, whom age, or diſeaſe, or calamity has reduced to want, are peculiarly entitled

titled to alms. Aſſiſting them, is working together with GOD, and vindicating his ways to men. They who are poor through ſloth, or drunkenneſs, or ſenſuality, or vain expence, are not equally entitled to relief: they ſuffer the puniſhment annexed by Providence to guilt. Yet when their miſery is extreme, the compaſſion which it excites is a token of divine mercy mingling with judgement. They are human creatures. Adverſity may reclaim. Gratitude for favours received, may prove the firſt ſentiment of returning goodneſs. From the rich who have ſuffered, or deſerved to ſuffer the penal effects of debauchery, compaſſion is due to the poor who ſuffer them. The penitent might endeavour to reclaim by kindneſs, thoſe who have ſinned after the ſimilitude of their own tranſgreſſion.

3. Conſider the poor, who are ſo from their own incapacity to conſider. Adviſe and aſſiſt them in the management of their field or of their trade, in turning their labour to the beſt account, in avoiding loſſes which they can ill bear, and in recovering what is due to them. Giving a little money to a poor perſon, or even giving money ſufficient to ſupply their neceſſities, will not always have the effect. To provide lodg-

ing and fuel, and food, and clothes, is indeed a more troubleſome way of giving alms, but it is the only way of rendering them effectual to the inconſiderate. It will perhaps be ſaid, *Let them learn to conſider.* They have much need, to be ſure; and if they had been capable of learning, miſery might ere now have taught them. But if they really want capacity, they are ſo much more objects of compaſſion. Your beſtowing conſideration on their caſe, is a ſeaſonable alms, and a proper teſtimony of gratitude to HIM who made you to differ.

## SECT. III.

THE methods of ſupplying the poor by taxation, hoſpitals, and voluntary gifts, might be conſidered and compared.

1. You have liſtened perhaps to the arguments of able men againſt ſupplying the poor by taxation; but may not theſe arguments be ſometimes liſtened to with a partial ear? Think on the equality of man, his original right to a ſubſiſtence on the earth, and in how many ways that right may be violated. Attend to the ſpirit of human laws, favouring, protecting, and avenging the rich;

rich; appropriating the earth, the air, and the water; debarring the poor by penalties from all that in them is. Is it much that in one inſtance they breathe another ſpirit, by inſuring to the miſerable a ſubſiſtence and a grave? Enquire if a legal proviſion for the poor has ever been found neceſſary, and if any thing ſhort of neceſſity would have led thoſe who pay to impoſe it. The expediency of enforcing that law, muſt be determined by circumſtances. If the love of many wax cold; if the rich withdraw from religious worſhip, and forget good works; if abſent proprietors do nothing for the poor on their eſtates; if the humane be burdened above what they are able to bear; if the poor be tempted by their increaſing number and preſſing wants, and the failure of other reſources, to put forth their hands and ſteal; a legal proviſion ſeems then to be expedient; it ſeems then to be equal and right, that the landholder who will not give to the poor, be compelled to give. Thoſe among us who have miniſtered to the poor, where the law is enforced, and where it is not enforced, can tell the difference it makes; a difference betwixt the frequent feeling and the conſtant fear of want on the one hand, and on the other, an adequate ſup-

ply of real wants, with deliverance from *fear, which cauſeth torment.*

The abuſe of *poor laws* is complained of; but let the evil be balanced with the good, the murmuring of the rich with the contentment of the poor, the inconvenience of few with the comfort of many, the pleaſure that is reſigned with the miſery that is extinguiſhed. If, upon the whole, good preponderates, let abuſes be corrected, and the ſyſtem perfected. In popiſh times, the funds of the church were a ſource of charity to the poor: after theſe funds paſſed into leſs charitable hands, want and miſery became extreme; and we may fairly aſcribe the interpoſition of civil government to the Chriſtian law of love *: that law might not influence the ſpoilers of churches, but it influenced the public mind; and ſtatutes were framed to ſupport humanity. When the Goſpel ſhall have made its promiſed progreſs, no law will be needed to enforce compaſſion, and a nation of Chriſtians would bluſh at the propoſal of a legal compulſatory to love one another: but the period is yet future, and the apoſtle's words on

* That legal proviſion for the poor is owing to Chriſtianity, and peculiar to it, is ſhewn by Biſhop Watſon, Sermon ſecond.

on another occaſion may be applied to this, *The law is a ſchool-maſter to bring us to Chriſt* *.

2. Hoſpitals are monuments of piety and Chriſtian love. They embalm the memory of founders, who bequeathed alms to children yet unborn. A tribute of honour is likewiſe due to thoſe who adminiſter with prudence and fidelity.

3. A willing mind is eſſential to alms. The tax for alimenting the poor, is a debt as due to them as rent to the landlord; to pay it, is to do juſtly. Chriſtian alms are voluntary, not enforced by human laws, but prompted by the law of love, and by the promiſe of a bleſſing from on high.

## SECT. IV.

1. DEVOTE a proportion of your income to alms †. This enſures the practice of an eſſential duty, which may be neglected or performed imperfectly, if left to accidental occaſions and feelings. You calculate a table, a wardrobe, a retinue, and amuſements, proportioned to your wealth: Such calculations are proper for the ſake of

* Note B. † Note C.

of juſtice. But if alms be left out, calculate anew. Conſider on the firſt day of the week, how GOD has proſpered you in the world, and what acknowledgement is due to him. It is a work of religion ſuited to the LORD's day. Weigh your wealth, and proportion your alms in the balance of the ſanctuary, with an eye to the Sovereign of the world who requires this at your hand, to the poor whom he has appointed to receive it, and to the day of judgement when he will requite it.

2. Uſe proper means to provide and increaſe a fund for alms. Habitual frugality is a mean, and occaſional ſavings from allowed expence*. When you meet with any worldly proſperity, add a thank-offering. "Let him work with his "hands, that he may have to give to him that "needeth." The Apoſtle recommends work, not only to procure an honeſt livelihood, but to furniſh means of charity. CHRIST wrought as a carpenter. It was uſual among the Jews for ſcholars to learn a mechanic trade. Paul, by working at his, remitted what was due to him as a preacher. The ſame practice continues in the Jewiſh ſchools, and Spinoza lived by his craft when

* Note D.

when they put him out of the Synagogue. If ſome profitable work could be thought of, conſiſtent with the office of miniſters in Scotland, it would augment livings, which diminiſh as national wealth increaſes, it would ſtrengthen their independence, which, humanly ſpeaking, is their ſtrongeſt bulwark; it would leſſen the number of their own claims on benevolence and compaſſion, and extend their power of doing good, which is the object for which it is now propoſed. Richard Baxter gave many of his writings to the poor, converting the labour of his mind into alms. Were thoſe who do nothing, to work a little with their hands for ſome benevolent purpoſe, it might promote their health, and virtue and happineſs. Dorcas was full of alms-deeds; and it appears from her works, which were ſhewn to the Apoſtle after her death, that ſhe made garments. Devout women, by following this pattern, may increaſe their fund for alms.

3. Conſider how the moſt good may be done with what you have devoted *. A little money goes a great way in furniſhing the neceſſaries of life to thoſe who have them not; it removes more pain, and gives more happineſs than the ſame

* Note E.

ſame ſum beſtowed on thoſe who have them. Liberal and generous donatives may ſometimes be proper; and benevolence in every form is lovely: but let not the hand even of generoſity trench on the fund for compaſſion. The proper objects of Chriſtian alms are the neceſſitous, the friendleſs, the helpleſs, the dejected, thoſe who can make no return.

It was an imitable practice of a pious man to beſtow his devoted ſum on a good work which would otherwiſe have been left undone. Where the poor receive a legal aliment, find out ſome poor perſon who does not receive it. Where hoſpitals of the ſick are endowed by others, miniſter to the ſick who are not admitted. Where bodily wants are ſupplied by others, miniſter to ſpiritual wants. When one good work is in a ſucceſsful train, invent another. Study to extend the ſphere of love.

4. Obey incidental calls to compaſſion, like the good Samaritan. "If thou forbear to de-"liver them that are drawn unto death, and "thoſe that are ready to be ſlain, if thou ſayeſt "behold we knew it not; doth not he that pon-"dereth the heart conſider it?"

ALEXANDER

ALEXANDER CRUDEN, author of the Concordance to the Bible, was preſent at the trial and condemnation of a Sailor for uttering a will knowing it to be forged. Cruden, having ſatisfied himſelf that the man had done it ignorantly, and without evil intention, recommended him to the royal mercy and prevailed; he at the ſame time inſtructed him in the principles of Religion, and brought him to repentance and a ſenſe of piety. Upon another occaſion, he met a man in whoſe countenance melancholy and deſpair were painted, and drew from him a confeſſion of intended ſuicide: Mr Cruden adminiſtred ſuch friendly conſolation, accompanied with pecuniary aid, that the poor man was ſoftened to reſignation, and gratitude, and hope.

DAVID DALE, the *Thomas Firmin* of Glaſgow, when a ſhip with Highland emigrants was put back, ſeized the moment of want and deſpondence, to give them employment at home. Good works are germinant, and a Society quickly ſprung up for the humane and patriotic purpoſe of preventing future emigration.

5. "One muſt not always wait for opportuni-
"ties, but ſometimes create them." This is a maxim

maxim of Lord Bacon's for riſing in life, and it is equally applicable to growth in grace. Benevolent inventions are traces of the Creator's image on the ſoul of man. The inventors were deified in times of ignorance, they are loved and honoured in times of light. Such in our own day is the invention of Sunday-ſchools, by Mr Raikes of Glouceſter, and their rapid progreſs in Britain and Ireland is an auſpicious feature of the age. Such is the attempt to aboliſh the ſlave trade, by Mr Wilberforce and his friends; it is lifting up the teſtimony of Jeſus againſt avarice and oppreſſion, and breathing his ſpirit of love to men. Such are the efforts of thoſe patriots who give liberty and laws to their fellow citizens. A vaſt ſpace is yet void for the creation of works of mercy. Unfading honours await thoſe who ſhall fill it up, when the honours which have ſo long been laviſhed on men of blood ſhall paſs through execration into oblivion.

6. "Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it "with thy might." Concentrate your powers to accompliſh the good work in which you are engaged *. National wealth is increaſed by a diviſion of labour, and the general ſtock of benevolence

* Note F.

volence is increaſed by a diviſion of the labours of love. It was a maxim of Jonas Hanway, that 'one vigorous and well-concerted remon-'ſtrance of a real evil muſt be more effectual 'than a thouſand vague complaints.' He himſelf made a vigorous and well-concerted remonſtrance in behalf of infant pariſh poor in London and Weſtminſter, entered into the melancholy detail of miſmanagement and neglect, publiſhed authentic liſts of their mortality, which was almoſt univerſal, encountered the reſentment of pariſh officers, of all ranks, informed himſelf of the beſt methods in practice, both at home and abroad, for preſerving poor infants. After perſevering for years in inveſtigating the evil and the remedy, he, at length, in 1766, by his own exertions, and at his own ſole expence, obtained an Act of Parliament, which, from its beneficial influence, was called by poor people, *the act for keeping children alive.*

The life of JONAS HANWAY is a ſeries of benevolent inventions, recommended by his writings, promoted by his bounty, and accompliſhed by unceaſing induſtry. All his efforts, except his oppoſition to the bill for naturalizing the

Jews, were dictated by a wise, and liberal, and enlarged benevolence. We calculate, with pleasing admiration, how much it is possible for a good man zealously affected to accomplish. 'In 'every good work that he began he did it with 'all his might and prospered *.'

GEORGE DRUMMOND, who deserves to be named among authors of good works, exerted himself, with effect, for an Infirmary at Edinburgh. By similar exertions infirmaries and dispensaries have risen in different parts, and more may yet arise. They are standing receptacles of misery and of mercy.

'The Orphan Hospital owes its foundation 'to the late Mr Andrew Gardner, merchant. 'Though undistinguished either by superior 'talents, or wealth, or connections; yet, by un-'remitting zeal and activity, he raised the pre-'sent fabric from the most inconsiderable be-'ginnings, and lived to see it in a prosperous 'way. He believed the object to be of impor-'tance, and he pursued it. His heart was set 'on it, and he succeeded. It shews how much 'it is in the power even of one man of ardent 'benevolence,

* See his life by Pugh.

'benevolence, to do the moſt important public 'good *.'—If none but orphans were admitted, it would remove Doctor M'Farlane's ſtrongeſt objection, and be a real improvement of the plan.

7. Promote good works undertaken and carried on by others; by your approbation, by your counſel, by your prayers, and by your mite. The moral edifice conſiſts of many parts beſide the beams, and pillars, and chief corner ſtones; and if you contribute a nail to the building, it is a "nail faſtened in a ſure place."

* M'Farlane's enquiries concerning the poor, p. 224.

# PART THIRD.

## SECT I.

"GIVE alms of ſuch things as are in your "power:" ſo ſome interpret the text. We may have it in our power to aſſiſt the poor by our talents, offices of truſt, worldly employments, and profeſſional ſkill.

1. Legiſlators, and judges, and magiſtrates have it in their power to diſcourage idleneſs, to open channels of productive labour, to undo the heavy burden, and break the oppreſſor's rod, to mingle juſtice with mercy.

2. The managers of a public revenue can ſometimes render it an inſtrument of good. To build churches in this metroplis, and to open ſchools, for affording to the poor and to their children the means of worſhip and of inſtruction, would far exceed, in point of meritorious uſefulneſs, the moſt coſtly decoration.

3. Merchants

3. Merchants and wealthy farmers, who command by their wealth the neceſſaries of life, might admit in their ſpeculations the motive of humanity. "He that withholdeth corn, the people "ſhall curſe him; but bleſſings ſhall be on the "head of him that ſelleth it *."

4. Men of rank in the army and navy, might attend to the clothing, and food, and medicine, and religious inſtruction of poor ſoldiers and ſailors, and ſee juſtice done them: they might conſider ſuch as have families with a diſtinguiſhing and kind attention.

5. Lawyers have at times an opportunity of recovering debts for the poor; of vindicating the rights of a widow or fatherleſs children; of diſcouraging law-ſuits which might reduce their clients to want; of re-eſtabliſhing peace where it was ready to be broken.

6. Medical men are often called, in the courſe of their laborious and benevolent duties, to the exerciſe of compaſſion; and in their breaſts the ſacred fire often burns. Let the bleſſing of ſuch as were ready to periſh come upon them. Let them not be weary in well-doing. Your la-



* Prov. xi. 26.

bours of love are recorded. Your witneſs is in heaven, and your record is on high.

7. Paſtors cannot behold with indifference, the poor of their flock in want and miſery. It is in the ſpirit of that Goſpel which they preach, and of the Maſter whom they ſerve, and of the approaching judgment which they announce, to take the lead in works of mercy.

## SECT. II.

"GIVE alms of ſuch things as are in your "power." Wealth puts many things in the poſſeſſor's power; he ought to know and to do them.

It may be in his power to rear up a village, and ſow the ſeeds of induſtry*; to make young men apprentices, and give marriage-portions to young women; to build a cottage for the wanderer†; and kindly to reclaim tranſgreſſors.

The rich who are tender-hearted ſoften the rigour of penal laws diſavowed by reaſon and huma-

* See on this ſubject, *A Letter to the People of Laurencekirk.*

† Note G.

humanity; they protect the laws of juſtice from being violated through want, and rage and deſpair, they bind the poor to order with the bands of a man, and draw the miſerable with a cord of love. 'Were I a miniſter of juſtice,' ſaid HELVETIUS, when urged to proſecute two poor men for killing hares and partridges on his ground, 'were I miniſter of juſtice, the proceſs 'might be unavoidable, but being a private per-'ſon, and the offence private, I am free to chuſe 'the way of mercy.' The PHILOSOPHER anticipated on his own eſtate the JUBILE which has ſince been publiſhed in his native land, announcing to the poor and oppreſſed the rights of men.

The poſſeſſion of a landed eſtate puts the happineſs of thoſe who live on it, to a certain degree, in the poſſeſſor's power, and their unhappineſs to a ſtill greater degree. The ſentiments of the late Lord KAMES in ſucceeding to an eſtate were theſe, 'I am ſent here, not to ſqueeze 'and torment, but to promote the deſign of Pro-'vidence in making men happy. I love to ſee 'cultivated fields and full barn-yards, to ſee the 'tenants content and cheerful, and to find that 'they provide for children and for old age. 'When they are with me, I cannot bear to be haughty

'haughty or inſolent: they are men, they are 'Chriſtians, they have their ſenſibilities, they 'have a right to happineſs. I could perhaps 'ſqueeze a hundred pounds more; but it would 'make them miſerable, and it would make me a 'hundred times more miſerable.'

A wealthy man can control thoſe who act under him. The conſcientious proprietor conſiders himſelf as accountable for what is done by agents in his name, and reſts not in the indolent and lame excuſe, that their arbitrary meaſures were unknown to him. He attends to the portion of earth and its inhabitants committed to him by Providence with a watchful paternal eye; liſtening to complaints, redreſſing wrongs, rewarding merit, doing juſtice, doing good.

The reſidence of a good landlord is a benefit to his eſtate, which he ſhould not withhold unneceſſarily. Soame Jenyns regretted that gentlemen reſorted to places of diſſipation at a diſtance from their eſtates, whereby their money did not revert to the diſtrict which produced it, rural hoſpitality was done away, and the ſtreams of charity were ſtopped, which would otherwiſe have gladdened the hearts of their poor neighbours;

bours; their inferiours were deprived of their example, encouragement, and protection in the practice of religion and virtue. He himself was compensated for the pains he had taken, and the difficulties he had met with in the office of a Justice, by the many opportunities he had been gratified with of reconciling those who came before him, inflamed with hatred against each other: for he considered that beatitude which is pronounced on the peace-maker, as an essential part of the internal evidence of the truth of the Christian Religion.—This trait of his life will appear to many a more satisfying *view of the internal evidence* than that which he published in a book.

Means of preserving and of restoring health may be furnished by the rich: they should attend to this, because health is the greatest temporal good, and without it the poor cannot earn bread. To send fuel among the young and infirm, and to drain and repair their houses; to provide woolen cloathing for those who are exposed to cold, and subject to diseases occasioned by it; to promote cleanliness by gifts of flax and soap, and encouragements to the washing with water, which was of old enjoined by the law of Moses

Moſes, and is ſtill a mean of health and comfort: to clothe poor children, upon condition of their regular attendance on worſhip and inſtruction, and their clean and decent appearance there;—to join conſideration with bounty in ſuch ways as theſe, doubles the value of the gift.

Inoculation for the ſmall pox is now generally approved by thoſe who are beſt qualified to judge. When the poor are convinced that it is a mean of rendering the diſeaſe milder and leſs dangerous, the rich might enable them to uſe it.

Medical aſſiſtance provided for the poor, is a ſeaſonable conſequential alms: and if kind viſits be added, with cordials and nouriſhment ſuited to a ſtate of recovery; and if the thoughts be turned with devout attention to the will and purpoſes of Providence in ſending trouble, this work of mercy is fulfilled.

Good done to the young is likely to be productive. The unmarried, or thoſe who have no children, may have it in their power to educate and eſtabliſh one or more of the children of their friends.

friends. Compared with this, a legacy is a thankleſs and comfortleſs and fruitleſs favour.

To a family in eaſy circumſtances, the expence of feeding and clothing a poor child is inconſiderable: the charity is nevertheleſs conſiderable, eſpecially if religious inſtruction and moral habits be added.

Things ſuperfluous and waſte in the houſe of one that is rich, might be preſerved and conſigned to a poor houſeholder. Were every houſe in which there is waſte, even thus to patronize the family of an indigent neighbour, it would ſomewhat alleviate the general burden of a low eſtate.

More liberal patronage is due to a deſerving family that is numerous and in ſtraitened circumſtances. Had ſuch a family a rich neighbour, to whom they look up for countenance and protection, and ſympathy and aid, it might inſpire contentment, and gratitude, and truſt, and cheerful perſeverance in well-doing; it might check the vices incident to poverty, by which the patronage would be forfeited. This is a ſuggeſtion of Dr Doddridge, and I ſhall repeat it in his own words.

words. 'Would every thriving family in a town 'caſt a pitying eye on one poor family in its 'neighbourhood, and take it under their patron-'age, to aſſiſt in feeding and cloathing, and teach-'ing the children, in ſupporting it in affliction, 'in defending it from wrongs, in adviſing thoſe 'that have the management of it as circumſtan-'ces might require; how great a difference 'would ſoon be produced in the appearance of 'things amongſt us!'

Penſions are a charity ſuited to the great. Such as have ſeen better days, and had a good education, and maintained their uprightneſs in adverſity, are proper objects of it. To conſole ſuch by a moderate annuity, is one of the real advantages of wealth. Gratitude will in this caſe be felt, and part of the bounty will deſcend in ſmaller ſtreams of charity. The unfortunate feel compaſſion: the kindneſs they have received, diſpoſes and enables them to be kind. In this way the alms of the rich find their way to the miſerable *.

"The houſehold of faith" is recommended by the Apoſtle to the ſpecial attention of thoſe who are

* Note H.

are able to do good, and to communicate. This refers to times when believers were few, and probably ſincere: it may ſtill be applied to thoſe who ſuffer in their worldly circumſtances for conſcience ſake; who prefer poverty to flattery, and falſehood, and fraud, leaving all the crooked ways of gain to the children of this world. They who will not flatter the vain for a ſubſiſtence, who are debarred from profitable articles of commerce and manufacture, becauſe they will not ſwear falſely nor equivocally; from a proviſion in the church and colleges, becauſe they differ in doubtful points from human ſtandards; and from civil and military preferments, becauſe of perplexing teſts and oaths; all ſuch are diſtinguiſhed members of "the houſehold of faith." A little will ſatisfy the believer whoſe heart is not on things of this world; he will be thankful to the generous hand that helps him to a retired quiet paſſage through the wilderneſs; his fervent prayer for a benefactor will be heard.

## SECT. III.

SPIRITUAL alms ſhould be conſidered by the rich who can do ſomething towards propagating the goſpel where it is unknown; towards plant-

ing churches and ſchools where they are needed, towards qualifying young men to preach and to teach.

There are inſtitutions for propagating Chriſtian knowledge both at home and abroad, to which the rich may contribute, with ſecreſy if they pleaſe, and with the aſſurance of a faithful application.

For planting a church in this kingdom, even where it is moſt neceſſary, the conſent of heritors is by law required; and hence few or none are planted, while many are ſuppreſſed. In this ſtate of things, the examples of Lady Yeſter and Lady Glenorchy are worthy of imitation; for in many pariſhes additional places of worſhip are wanted. "He is worthy for whom thou ſhouldſt "do this, for he loveth our nation, and hath built "us a ſynagogue," was the acceptable recommendation of a centurion to JESUS CHRIST.

Warming a church with ſtoves would render attendance leſs dangerous to the old and infirm, who are often moſt deſirous to attend; and more ſafe and comfortable to all the worſhippers.

To

To educate for the miniſtry, a young man of good parts, and of a ſerious mind, would be a valuable gift, and, in the preſent ſtate of things, very ſeaſonable. They, who can educate their ſons liberally, are apt to think a Scotch ſtipend a ſlender maintenance. The prieſthood, as in the days of Jeroboam, is deſcending to the meaneſt of the people. Extenſive knowledge and liberal manners ſeldom fall to their lot. This, in an enlightened and lukewarm age, makes the ſacrifice of the LORD to be deſpiſed. It indeed becomes the miniſter of CHRIST to be content with little, and to illuſtrate poverty by virtue; but it is for the honour and intereſt of religion, that he abound in knowledge as well as goodneſs. While no public proviſion is made for the Clergy adequate to the expence of a liberal education, it is a good work for rich individuals to furniſh ſome with the means of knowledge, who, in the next age, may ſtand in the gap, to ſtem the tide of growing profaneſs and infidelity.

An opulent and pious parent might do good to the church and to poſterity, by devoting a ſtudious ſon, and placing him in the miniſtry, with all the advantages of profeſſional know-

ledge, and poliſhed manners, and eaſy circumſtances.

The LORD's Supper might be celebrated more frequently, if the neceſſary expence were furniſhed. Miniſters of this church, who ſeldom have money to ſpare, would willingly beſtow their labour. To an affectionate friend of CHRIST, it is a work peculiarly grateful to reiterate the memorial of his death, and to awaken the devout and kind affections which mingle with that memorial. The poſſeſſor of an eſtate might in this way entail a bleſſing.

A ſchool for the uſe of remote villages is often wanted. The expence, to a benevolent proprietor, is requited by the good that is done. The inhabitants are reconciled to their lot; the young are admitted to an invaluable privilege; a bright genius may be there diſcovered and brought to light; the plan of Chriſtianity is forwarded, in covering the earth with the knowledge of the LORD.

The late Lady Glenorchy, who, in her life, ſet a pattern of piety and good works to perſons in high rank, finiſhed that pattern at her death,

death, by leaving five thouſand pounds for village ſchools.

With a ſmall annual ſum a ſchool might be opened on the LORD's day, for the young who have learned to read, and are entering on labour; and for thoſe who have had the misfortune never to be taught. By this mean, acquaintance with the Scripture is retained and increaſed, and a door of knowledge is opened for the ignorant. A habit of reverencing the Sabbath is acquired, at the time of life when habits are formed, and when Sabbath-breaking is often the firſt ſtep in that broad way which leadeth to deſtruction. A good foundation is laid for the time to come; memory is ſtored with the truths, and laws, and conſolations of GOD; the tender heart receives its firſt indelible impreſſions from the ſacred oracle; the opening mind is occupied and intereſted with things concerning ſalvation, and the way of life is choſen.

Chriſtians, who are not able ſingly, might unite in a good work of this kind. The concerting, and ſuperintending, and promoting it, would be an agreeable and uſeful bond of union.

The effect of aſſociating for good works is illuſtrated by the Society through whoſe means we are now aſſembled, to offer alms and prayer to GOD, and to meditate upon his law*. It gives an object and an edge to religious zeal; it opens new channels of beneficence; it gives countenance and ſupport to the cauſe of CHRIST, in which the feeble mind might heſitate to act alone; it unites the wiſdom of many in deviſing and ripening uſeful plans. It forms a contraſt to the numerous aſſociations throughout the land, where money and luxury, in various ſhapes, are the objects. While we read in the Prophet Malachi ſome humiliating characters of the preſent age, we turn with comfort to another branch of the prophecy which is alſo accompliſhed. "Then they that feared the LORD ſpake often "together, and the LORD hearkened and heard; "and a book of remembrance was written for "them that feared the LORD, and that thought "on his name†."

* This Sermon was preached at Edinburgh before the Society in Scotland for promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor, June 1ſt, 1788.

† Mal. iii. 16.

SECT.

## SECT. IV.

A LITTLE money may be uſefully laid out on well-choſen books for lending to the poor. The poor have leiſure hours; they can read, and ſome of them love reading; but they cannot purchaſe books, and may fall on improper ones. By being properly ſupplied, they eſcape the temptation to idleneſs, and vain thoughts, and fooliſh talking; their minds are improved, and their converſation furniſhed. A miniſter of religion might in this way follow out the miniſtry of advice, and reproof, and comfort.

Pariſh libraries would be an uſeful inſtitution. Reading forms the mind. The influence of books at the Reformation was mighty, and is at all times great. In the dawn of knowledge, it was an object with Leighton and others to furniſh the Clergy with books. By private and circulating libraries, the middle ranks are now furniſhed. By a pariſh library, knowledge would deſcend. Under a miniſter's direction, poiſonous books would be excluded, and good ones choſen, ſuited to the young, the thoughtleſs, the buſy, the ſick, the mourner, the melancholy, the aged.

aged. An appetite for controverſy will ſubſide when better food is provided. The expence of ſuch a plan, if properly explained and recommended, would perhaps be furniſhed in ſome pariſhes by heritors, or well-diſpoſed individuals. Religious ladies, who miniſter kindly and liberally to the bodily wants and diſeaſes of the poor, would miniſter with equal kindneſs and liberality to the wants and diſeaſes of their ſouls. Clergymen who have any thing to ſpare for alms (and they ſhould deny themſelves in order to ſpare a little) might beſtow it on food for the mind. The moſt preſſing temporal wants are uſually ſupplied by poor rates and individual compaſſion, while wants of the mind have been hitherto leſs generally conſidered. Miniſters and others might thence be excited to write practical treatiſes ſuited to the times. The puritans, who excel in this kind of writing, adapted religious inſtruction to their own day. Since they wrote, a century has elapſed. Knowledge is increaſed. Language, and taſte, and manners, and circumſtances both private and national, have undergone a change. By adapting religious inſtruction in ſermons and books to actual circumſtances, mankind are prepared for the Reign of CHRIST.

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The compoſition of ſuch works will not lead to literary fame and emolument, nor will it arreſt any who are qualified to attain them: but to ſome country miniſters it might relieve the languor of leiſure hours, avert unclerical company and paſtimes, attach them to the cloſet, and furniſh ſuitable converſation with one another. An object, however ſmall, is better than none. Compoſition is a pleaſant exerciſe, and a view of uſefulneſs adds to the pleaſure. A ſingle thread, though a ſlight matter, goes towards weaving the web which becomes a garment; and the ſlighteſt materials have a value which compoſe the robe of righteouſneſs. By practical writings the general good is promoted, the miniſterial character is ſuſtained, and a degree of perſonal honour is reflected on the man who thus redeems and conſecrates his leiſure hours, higher at leaſt than if he had not ſo redeemed them*.

* Note I.

PART.

# PART FOURTH.

## SECT. I.

"GIVE alms of ſuch things as you have." "Silver and gold have I none," ſaid Peter to a lame man who aſked alms, "but ſuch as I have "give I thee. In the name of JESUS CHRIST of "NAZARETH riſe up and walk." There are gifts of the Spirit more excellent than that of miracles, and far more excellent than ſilver and gold, which may ſtill be exerciſed in works of mercy. The affectionate and enlightened caſuiſt, who puts his ſoul in my ſoul's ſtead, treating my wounded ſpirit with wiſe and kind attention, reſolving my doubts, clearing the way of duty, leading me to my Father; he gives not as the world giveth. They, who conſider the caſe of ſouls, and miniſter to their neceſſities and wants, enter into the Spirit of CHRIST's precept, and follow cloſely his ſteps of mercy. "Who "is weak," ſays the Apoſtle, "and I am not weak?

"weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?" He entered into the weakneſſes of his brethren, that he might ſtrengthen them; into their offences, that he might reclaim and conciliate.

"Look not every man on his own things, but "every man alſo on the things of others." A man muſt look on his own things firſt and moſt, becauſe there he is moſt accountable; but the precept is levelled againſt a cold contracted ſpirit, which takes no concern in the things of others, and repels every motive to action but ſelfiſhneſs. Many gifts are beſtowed for rendering us uſeful to others; and he who looks only to his own things, buries his talent in the earth. "Let us conſider one another, to provoke to "love and to good works."

Some, who cannot give much alms, can perſuade the rich to give. Wiſdom, and eloquence, and influence of every kind, are worthily exerted in the cauſe of charity. Even bad men may be influenced. Herod heard John the Baptiſt gladly, and did many things. When the ſeed falls on good ground, it yields fruit an hundred fold. King Edward the Sixth, in conſequence of Biſhop Ridley's Sermon on Alms, founded St Bartholomew's

Bartholomew's hoſpital for the ſick and wounded, Bridewell for the wilfully idle and mad, and Chriſtchurch for orphans. After laying a foundation upon which ſo many works of mercy have ſince been built, he bleſſed GOD for ſparing him to accompliſh this ſervice, and died the more contented *. The rich ſhould be exhorted in life, and at death, to be rich in good works. It is, for the moſt part, proper in a teſtament, to leave ſomething to the poor, eſpecially to poor relations †. In the preſent times, this duty is often neglected, and thoſe who counſel the ſick ſhould remind them of it. It is ſtill more important while in health, that we "conſider one "another, to provoke unto love and to good "works; and ſo much the more as we ſee the "day approaching ‡."

"Let us conſider one another," the power of doing good which each poſſeſſes, and how to bring it to act; the ſnares of worldlineſs which are laid for each, and how to break them; the good works which require a combination, and how

* Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation.

† See the doctrine of teſtamentary alms, in *a diſcourſe on the duty of making a teſtament.*

‡ Heb. x. 24, 25.

how to co-operate in fulfilling them. Converſation has great influence upon conduct: it is eaſy to ſtir up ſelfiſhneſs and wrath by the tongue, and by the ſame inſtrument we may provoke to love and to good works: there are principles of benevolence, which in young minds may be cheriſhed and drawn forth, by preſenting kind and compaſſionate views, by combating ungenerous and cruel maxims, by approving and ripening plans of uſefulneſs. Though it be wrong to boaſt of alms, yet they may ſafely be ſpoke of in the way of mutual conſultation, and advice, and incitement: by ſuch a confidential intercourſe, proper objects are diſcovered and impoſition detected, knowledge in the doctrine of alms is increaſed, the heart is enlarged, and generous affections kindle. Ordinary converſation is very properly ſeaſoned with the praiſe of goodneſs: indignation at vice may be tinged with perſonal animoſity, but the love and the praiſe of virtue indicate and cheriſh pure and undefiled religion *.

* Note K.

## SECT. II.

THE learned may provoke to love and to good works, by propoſing arguments and motives; by writing the hiſtory of thoſe who excel in uſefulneſs; by celebrating ſuch as have opened new ſources of benevolence, and entered untrodden paths of mercy. If praiſe be due to inventors who enlarge the ſphere of happineſs, it is alſo due to thoſe who diminiſh the ſphere of miſery.

The doctrine of alms, when 'accommodated 'to the ſituations which ariſe in the life of an 'inhabitant of this country in theſe times,' as in Paley's Syſtem of Morals, may aſſiſt the practice. By peruſing there the obligation to alms, the manner of giving them, and the pretences for neglecting them anſwered; a benevolent reader is more "thoroughly furniſhed unto all "good works."

Fictitious characters of goodneſs, are often drawn; and though their impreſſion be for the moſt part airy and fallacious, yet while the taſte for ſuch reading continues, fictions of beneficence

are

are wholeſomer food for the imagination than much that it is apt to feed upon.

Truth is preferable to fiction; it conveys knowledge with more effect, and a pure mind reliſhes it more. Such a book as *Howard on the State of Priſons in England*, intereſts and edifies. Miſery is beheld in forms little thought of, not fantaſtical, but real forms. A pattern of mercy is ſet before us, not in word but in deed. We ſee the knowledge of laws and of arts, of religion and of the world, rendered ſubſervient, and learn what this meaneth, "Let "love abound with all knowledge." We trace the footſteps of love ſtrong as death, in its exertions and its influences. Sympathetic emotions incite the powerful to amend laws leſs humane to priſoners in Britain than on the Continent, and to check illegal impoſitions on the unhappy; they incite the private citizen to alleviate miſeries leſs under the public eye, and leſs connected with guilt than thoſe of priſoners. To the devout reader, proſpects of GOD's adminiſtration open. "From heaven GOD be-"holds the earth, to hear the groaning of the "priſoner." He ſends his ſervant the organ of his compaſſion, having trained him by the ſor-

rows of captivity from cruel men. "Surely the "wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee, and the reſidue "of wrath wilt thou reſtrain."

In reading *the evidence on the Slave Trade*, or even the abſtract of that evidence, many intereſting thoughts ariſe; on the ſevere, unmerited ſufferings of our fellow-creatures, which wring the heart with pity and ſorrow: on cruelties which rouſe indignation, mingled with aſtoniſhment at their entering the female heart; which force the wretched into the laſt aſylum that GOD has opened, where the "ſlave is free "from his maſter:" on the diſhonours of our native land, and the infamy of Britain among the nations: on the violated law of our Redeemer, and the reproach extending to all who are called by his name; which kindle zeal to fulfil in our own ſphere his law of love, and by every poſſible mean to wipe away the reproach: on the pure philanthropy of thoſe godlike men who now appear for the oppreſſed, and expoſe the guilt of their oppreſſors, and plead for juſtice: on the time foretold in prophecy, when the merchants of the earth, whoſe minds are *earthy, ſenſual, deviliſh*, ſhall lament the fall of their traffic in ſlaves and the ſouls of men; and on the ſigns of that

that time approaching, "Heaven has revealed "their iniquity, and the earth is riſen up againſt "them:" on the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication which ſhall precede the deſtruction of that *wicked one*, and which ſo well accords with the preſent aſpect of Providence.—Ariſe, O LORD, and judge the people. Let the wickedneſs of the wicked come to an end. Send forth thy light and thy truth to the dark corners of the earth, the habitations of cruelty. Let the cry of the oppreſſed, the groaning of the priſoner, and the ſlave's unutterable anguiſh come up before thee. Make light to ariſe in the darkneſs. Let all unjuſt and cruel uſurpation over the natural, and civil and religious rights of men, be for ever broken. In the knowledge of thee, the only true GOD, and of JESUS CHRIST, whom thou haſt ſent, and in the exerciſe of thoſe rights and faculties which thou haſt given, let thy rational offspring throughout the earth rejoice. Let the people praiſe thee, O LORD, let all the people praiſe thee *.

* Note L.

## SECT. III.

Efforts of genius and philoſophy are praiſe-worthy, in proportion to their influence on virtue and happineſs. 'Men of deep reſearch and curious enquiry,' ſays Biſhop Butler, 'ſhould juſt be put in mind not to miſtake what they are doing. If their diſcoveries ſerve the cauſe of virtue and religion in the way of proof, motive to practice, or aſſiſtance in it; or if they tend to render life leſs unhappy, and promote its ſatisfactions; then they are moſt uſefully employed.'

The art of inſtructing the deaf and dumb, is a high and happy effort of genius *. It reflects honour on the underſtanding and heart of thoſe who practiſe it: it makes light to ariſe on ſuch as ſit in darkneſs, and calls forth their latent powers: it renders the poor who are in ſuch circumſtances, objects of efficient charity. Contributions were formerly made for the redemption of ſlaves: a contribution for inſtructing the deaf and dumb, may be conſidered as a ranſom for the ſoul,

* This art is happily revived in Scotland by Mr John Johnſton, writing-maſter, in Edinburgh.

ſoul, for opening the priſon-door, and ſetting its faculties free.

The number of poor children born deaf and dumb is ſmall, and the expence of inſtructing them is not very conſiderable; ſo that if the ſympathy and liberality of their neighbourhood were properly excited and ſolicited, this branch of human misfortune might, in moſt caſes, be alleviated.

Mr HAUY, a Frenchman, has invented an art of teaching the blind to read and write, and account, and to practiſe ſome mechanic trades; and there is an inſtitution at Paris, ſupported by the opulent, for carrying his art into effect. Deprived of the moſt uſeful and delightful faculty, the blind have a claim on compaſſion, atteſted by the ſeal of God; and it is pleaſant to ſee wealth and genius combined in rendering them leſs helpleſs and forlorn: with the ſame kind of zeal that naturaliſts ſearch for and preſerve rare inſects, theſe amiable philoſophers ſearch out poor children that are blind for preſervation and inſtruction. Surrounding nations have long been emulous to adopt the trivial arts of France—far more worthy of adoption are their arts of humanity.

Experiences

Experiences recorded and formed into maxims, are 'gifts of the wife.' Solomon, and the Son of Syrac, have beſtowed ſuch gifts on men. The application of religious and moral principles to particular ſtations and profeſſions, is learned from experience. From Marcus Antoninus, kings and princes of the earth may learn wiſdom. In Sir Matthew Hale's Contemplations, the laws of virtue, and the practice of piety, are applied to the character and office of a Judge. Dr Gregory teaches the duties of a Phyſician. In every profeſſion, there are peculiar temptations and peculiar duties beſt known to profeſſional men. The practice of virtue and piety in trade, are explained in *The Religious Tradeſman*, lately republiſhed by the Society in Scotland for promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor. There are wiſe and good men in every profeſſion and ſphere of life, ſome of whom are qualified to inſtruct thoſe of their own calling and ſphere. Profeſſional knowledge is often taught in books; the preſent propoſal is, that profeſſional morals be alſo taught.

SECT.

## SECT. IV.

"GIVE alms of ſuch things as are in your "power." Ere long they will be out of your power. Delay in doing good, is equally common and equally dangerous as in ceaſing to do evil. If, in liſtening to the doctrine of alms as at this hour, a kind purpoſe ſprings up in your heart, preſerve and cheriſh and haſten to fulfil it. Beware leſt the good of this world ſnatch it away, leſt returning ſelfiſhneſs root it out. Beware of reſiſting the ſpirit of love. Liſten not to the worldly maxims of pretended friends. Shun profane mockers, whoſe breath of ridicule, in an unprincipled age, has blaſted ſo many ſeeds of goodneſs. Be jealous over your own changeable deceitful hearts. Inſtead of endleſs muſing on your purpoſed good, and talking about and expoſing it, or plucking the honour prematurely —Do it.

The opportunity for alms may be loſt by delay. The poor child grows up in ignorance and ill habits, while you are forming a plan to educate him. The naked are ſuffering from cold, while your ſuperfluous garments are moth eaten.

The

The ſick man is dying, and your cordials may come too late. "A word ſpoken in ſeaſon, How "good is it!" but how quickly and irrevocably does the ſeaſon paſs! How many plans of amendment and benevolence does unexpected death for ever fruſtrate!

Teſtamentary alms are not always ſure. Mr Mayot, a godly man in Charles the Second's time, bequeathed ſix hundred pounds to ejected miniſters, not becauſe they were non-conformiſts, but becauſe many ſuch were poor and pious, to be diſtributed by Richard Baxter. This bequeſt was, in the ſpirit of Chriſtian love, committed to an apoſtolic man for the relief of GOD's ſervants in adverſity. In his lifetime he might have made the relief effectual; but the King's Attorney, Sir Robert Sawyer, ſued for it in Chancery, and the Lord Keeper North gave it all to the King. 'I had got in all my life,' ſaid Richard Baxter of himſelf, 'the juſt ſum of a thouſand 'pounds. Having no child, I devoted it to cha-'rity. Before my purpoſe was accompliſhed, 'the King cauſed his Exchequer to be ſhut, and 'it was loſt, which I mention to counſel any 'man that would do good, to do it ſpeedily and with

'with all his might *.' There are many inſtances of benevolent purpoſes fruſtrated by delay. They are ſo many reaſons for doing the good we intend when it is moſt needed, and while it is in the power of our hand to do it.

## SECT. V.

"Do good to all men as you have opportu-"nity," or *in ſeaſon*, as the word ſignifies. They ſhall reap, who ſow in due ſeaſon. Our own circumſtances, and thoſe of others, mark the ſeaſons for doing good.

Deliverance, for example, from dangerous diſeaſe, or from any imminent danger, prompts the rich to give alms as a token of gratitude, as an expreſſion of ſympathy with thoſe who ſuffer, and as a fruit of the warning they have received, that the time of life and uſefulneſs is uncertain as well as ſhort.

To thoſe who return from abroad with an overflowing cup, it is the ſeaſon for deviſing liberal things, for comforting their parents, for extending

* Baxter's Life, written by himſelf.

tending to their relations ſuch peace as the world giveth, for diſperſing and giving to the poor, for realiſing the plans of benevolence which they formed in early years. To ſuch it is indeed an antecedent duty to review their method of acquiring, to compare it with the Chriſtian rule, and to judge themſelves, that they be not judged. "I the LORD hate robbery for a burnt-of-"fering*." Let the honeſt poſſeſſor of riches conſider Solomon's ſentence, "There is no good in "them, but for a man to rejoice and to do good." The enlightened zealous practice of good works is a ſhield from idleneſs, uſeleſſneſs, frivolity, languor, and ſuicide.

Upon ſome occaſions, a ſtretch in expence is reckoned fit, as at a funeral, a marriage-feaſt, the departure of a friend, or the meeting of friends who have long been ſeparated. Upon occaſion of general or local calamity, it ſeems fit for Chriſtians who have it at all in their power to make a ſtretch in alms. In a tender heart motives ſpring up and multiply. Have we indulged expenſive curioſity and vanity without a grudge, and ſhall we grudge a ſimilar expence to indulge compaſſion? Do we ſpend in an evening what

* Iſaiah lxi. viii.

what might feed a poor family a week, and ſhall we not impart ſuperfluity to neceſſity? Have we loſt money by fraudulent debtors? let us lend part of what remains to the LORD, who will aſſuredly repay. Has GOD proſpered you in the world? bring forward your thank-offering. Is the dearth of proviſion a mean of wealth to you? double your bounty to the indigent. Have you any cauſe of joy? hallow it by alms. Is your mind troubled? the fruit of mercy is peace. Do you know from experience the pleaſure of doing good? let the remembrance of that pleaſure, and the increaſing objects of beneficence, excite you to abound more and more. Have you forgotten to do good, and to communicate? GOD is long-ſuffering; but if you ſtill neglect the opportunity, how aggravated the guilt! Deliverance will be wrought, for GOD is our Father; but ſhall you be able to forgive yourſelves, if you refuſe to be fellow-workers with him in relieving his children? Will it not cauſe future regret to the Chriſtian who has of this world's goods, if he is not liberal in times of need? Could we ſuppoſe regret in heaven, it would ſpring up from the remembrance (not of uncharitableneſs, for the uncharitable are not there)

but from the remembrance of a ſparing hand, when CHRIST will ſeem to ſay of your ſcanty offering, *Was this thy kindneſs to thy friend?* We know not diſtinctly the ſentiments of a future ſtate! but we know this, "HE THAT SOWETH "SPARINGLY, SHALL REAP ALSO SPARINGLY."

PART

## PART FIFTH.

AN important branch of the ſubject remains. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before "men, to be ſeen of men." Let not the love of praiſe be your motive. "Do not ſound a "trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do." Make no oſtentatious diſplay of alms. "Let "not your left hand know what your right "hand doth." Be as ſecret in conveying relief as is conſiſtent with rendering it effectual. "If "thine eye be ſingle," if the intention be right, "thy whole body ſhall be full of light;" every ſtep and circumſtance of duty ſhall be properly directed.

The Apoſtle's inſtruction on this ſubject, is a good abridgement of his Maſter's. "He that "giveth, let him do it with ſimplicity." Give with ſimplicity, without magnifying or vilifying your gift, without curious reflection on the temper with which it is received, or the light in which it may appear to others; without the retours of vanity and ſelf-complacence; without affectation of any kind; for even the affectation

of ſecrecy is againſt that ſimplicity with which we ought to give.

"Do not your alms before men, to be ſeen of "men." They may be done before men, though from a higher motive than to be ſeen and praiſed. Compaſſion muſt not be ſuppreſſed, becauſe the relief which it affords is viſible. If we "do good to all as we have opportunity," it will ſometimes appear, and it is ſometimes fit that it ſhould. Regard is due to appearances. "Abſtain from the appearance of evil. Let not "your good be evil ſpoken of. Think on things "that are lovely and of good report." The appearance of a covetous temper is evil; the appearance of a merciful temper is lovely, and of good report *.

One living on a rich inheritance, without child or brother, who ſhews no kindneſs to his relations, whoſe tenants often feel the rigour of juſtice unqualified by equitable and humane conſiderations, whoſe mercy never extends to the poor on his eſtate, who abandons his domeſtic ſervants in age and ſickneſs, who contributes nothing to public plans of beneficence, and whoſe ſcanty

* Note M.

ſcanty offering in the Houſe of GOD is a reproach; this man has the appearance of covetouſneſs: an hoſpital riſing on his aſhes, is not an atonement. One in ſimilar circumſtances who puts on bowels of mercies, is lovely and of good report. He is a "city ſet on a hill, which cannot be hid." His wealth is known, and the ſymptoms of it are obſerved; but with the knowledge and obſervation of his wealth are combined, the knowledge and obſervation of his public ſpirit and humanity. His devotion and alms in the Houſe of GOD are exemplary. The plenty and peace in his own houſe, with goodneſs and mercy following his domeſtics all their lives, render it deſirable to be a hired ſervant there. On his eſtate the remains of bondage are aboliſhed, and his tenants ſecured in long and peaceable poſſeſſion. To ſuch as are oppreſſed, he is a refuge. Poor families, whom the cruel are ſo eager to thruſt out, he plants in houſes; and inſtitutes employment for their children. In all his improvements, and in all his ornaments, it is a leading object to feed the poor with the bread of induſtry. Like his Father in heaven, he pours mercy over all his works. None of his induſtrious poor are forgotten in the day of their calamity. "He is as a hiding-place from the ſtorm,

" and a covert from the tempeſt, as rivers of wa-
" ter in a dry place, and the ſhadow of a great
" rock in a weary land."

" Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that o-
" thers may ſee your good works;" that the reproach of avarice may not fall on Chriſtians, that " wiſdom may be juſtified of her children," that GOD may be glorified.

The praiſe of men is comparatively a low motive, and a ſmall reward; it is partial and limited and evaneſcent, and ſo is the pleaſure which it yields. A Chriſtian ſhould riſe above and look beyond it. The right motive in giving alms, is to him a matter of high, of everlaſting conſequence. I ſhall therefore conclude by ſuggeſting ſome conſiderations which tend to purify our alms, to exclude vain glory, and to clothe them with humility.

1. Conſider alms as given to the offspring of GOD, who has made of one blood all the families of the earth, who has by JESUS CHRIST united believers into one body, of which he is the Head. While under the influence of theſe views, an obligation to aſſiſt the poor is felt, and neceſſity is laid

laid upon us to relieve the miſerable. It is no longer a work of ſupererogation or ground of boaſting; it is only doing what is equal and right. He that hath gives to him that needeth;—he diſcharges a truſt committed to him by GOD. You contribute to an aſylum for orphans—they are the children of your Father in heaven. You bring up an orphan in your houſe—it is providing for a younger child of the family. You miniſter to a poor neighbour in diſtreſs—it is one member of the body ſympathizing with and miniſtring to another member that ſuffers. You have done what was your duty to do.

2. Keep in mind, that the means of doing good which are now poſſeſſed, muſt be all accounted for; that of them to whom much is given the more will be required; that a large truſt involves ſtrong temptations, and "it is hard for a rich man "to enter into the kingdom of Heaven." A rich man, who believes in CHRIST, has peculiar reaſons for humility and godly fear. Under manifold temptations to forget GOD and his needy brethren, and a judgement to come, he feels himſelf on ſlippery places, from whence many have fallen into deſtruction and perdition. His prayer aſcends for deliverance in danger, for diſcernment

ment of the beſt ways of doing good, and for a heart to walk in them. Studying the laws, and following the ſteps of the SON of GOD, he never accounts that he has already attained or is already perfect.

3. Endeavour to grow in goodneſs. Vanity will ſubſide in proportion as love and good works increaſe and multiply. It is of the firſt and feeble acts of virtue a man is apt to boaſt; owing to ſelf-ignorance, and ignorance of the law of GOD, which is exceeding broad. As he grows in goodneſs, other ſentiments will ariſe. 'How 'manifold the evils around me which excite 'compaſſion! how few of them can I remove or 'alleviate! how inadequate to my powers have 'my exertions hitherto been! I am grieved for 'miſeries beyond my help. I am humbled for 'neglecting what I might and ought to have 'done.' Theſe ſentiments, which indeed are evidences of growth in grace, impel him to leave the things behind, and to preſs forward in the path of mercy and humility.

4. Mingle devotion with alms. In our intercourſe with fellow-creatures, thoughts of vanity are apt to ariſe, but they diſappear in the preſence

preſence of GOD. "Come into his courts, and "bring an offering with you." Your offering there is a memorial of dependence, an expreſſion of gratitude for favours received, an evidence of love to him who loved you. While divine mercy is celebrated in the aſſembly of the ſaints, they feel the pureſt and the higheſt motives to be merciful. In the exerciſe of mercy, their fellowſhip is with the FATHER, and with the SON.

Let private alms be accompanied with prayer and thankſgiving: prayer for thoſe whom you relieve, and thankſgiving that it is your bleſſed lot to give. By this mean kind affections to the poor are cheriſhed, your worldly poſſeſſions are viewed in their ſource, boaſting is excluded from the footſtool of mercy.

5. Turn your attention and your alms to the needy who are obſcure, whoſe caſes are not known, whoſe voices are not heard, whoſe names are never mentioned, and of whom there will be no remembrance.

6. Join alms to repentance. In the Old Teſtament ſin-offerings were appointed; the penitent

tent confeſſed his ſin over the head of the victim, and the mercy ſeat was approached through the blood of ſprinkling; this ordinance accorded with the feelings of remorſe, and the correſponding ſpirit of ſacrifice. It is the doctrine of the New Teſtament, that "to do good, and to communicate, are ſacrifices with which GOD is "well pleaſed." If in the hour of penitential ſorrow, we offer ſuch ſacrifices, they aſſociate with contrition, and, inſtead of foſtering pride, are memorials of humility.

7. Alms are a preparation for adverſity and death, and theſe dark proſpects hide vanity from the eye. "Shut up alms in thy ſtore-houſe, "for it ſhall deliver thee in all affliction." Job, when bereaved of earthly comfort, conſoled himſelf with this ſong in the night. "Eyes "was I to the blind, and feet to the lame. I "was a father to the poor and fatherleſs, and "cauſed the widow's heart to ſing for joy."

*Conſider the poor, and the Lord will ſtrengthen thee on a bed of languiſhing.* "*Thou wilt make all his bed in his ſickneſs.*" From the painful feelings of a ſick-bed, the merciful are not exempted. The man whoſe heart is tender

tender feels often more than others, the ſeverity of pain, the pang of ſeperation, and the ſting of guilt. His ſins riſe up in mournful remembrance. Doubts and fears trouble, and toſs, and threaten to overwhelm his ſoul. But even in the darkeſt night, while theſe waves and billows are paſſing over him, rays of comfort open from the remembrance of works of mercy. —"My own heart condemns me, and thou "puniſheſt leſs than mine iniquities deſerve. "Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant. "Behold, O GOD, our ſhield, and look on me in "the face of *thine anointed*, who gave himſelf an "offering for ſin, and promiſed mercy to the "merciful. Amidſt all my wanderings I have "not wandered from his ſteps of mercy. I have "loved the poor, thou knoweſt, and taught them, "what is now the deſire of mine own heart, to "hope in thy mercy."

NOTES.

# NOTES.

## Note A. Page 19.

THE words of the text, according to ſome Critics *, are to be underſtood ironically. Irony is a figure ſeldom uſed by Chriſt, and he was not likely by the uſe of it to depreciate alms. The words correſpond to and illuſtrate Matth. xxiii. 25. "Wo unto you, ſcribes and phariſees, "hypocrites! ye make clean the outſide of the "cup and platter, but within they are full of "extortion and exceſs: cleanſe firſt that which "is within, that the outſide may be clean alſo." Here is a ſolemn inſtruction for attaining purity, *cleanſe firſt that which is within*, upon which the words in Luke are a commentary, *Give alms*. But what trace of irony is here? One would think that *the god of this world* had inſpired the criticiſm, to explain away an obvious precept,



* Critici ſacri in locum.

and to vilify an important duty which interferes with the love of the world. In the ſame avaricious ſpirit of criticiſm, the words rendered *ſuch things as ye have* are explained by one which literally ſignifies *leavings*, inſinuating that if alms muſt be given, the offal is enough. But the words uſed by Chriſt, in the judgment of the beſt critics, ſignify things that are with you, in your own power, for your own uſe, within you, or in your heart which is the centre of a worldling's poſſeſſions, and in reference to which the Pſalmiſt ſays, *when riches increaſe ſet not your heart on them.* Our Lord is addreſſing the Phariſees, who, with all their pretenſions to ſanctity, had the world in their hearts.—Pluck it thence by alms-giving, and all things are *clean* unto you. The metaphor is ſuggeſted by the incident that gave riſe to his diſcourſe; and from the application of *clean* to hands and cups, it is transferred to mind. A queſtion here occurs, How are all things clean to thoſe who give alms? To this it may be anſwered. 1. The Greek word for alms is derived from one which ſignifies pity or compaſſion, and the feeling of pity is ſuppoſed in the act of alms-giving. Now pity militates againſt covetouſneſs, and when exerciſed in beneficence actually overcomes it, and

ſo

ſo tends to cleanſe or purify the mind from a moral ſtain, from the *ravening and wickedneſs*, or, according to Dr Campbell's tranſlation, the *rapaciouſneſs and malevolence* of which the Phariſees were inwardly full. Ariſtotle ſpeaks of the pity which tragedy excites as a *purification*, and that this is the end propoſed by tragedy. It is no doubt ſomething to break the train of ſelfiſh and diſſocial paſſions, even by temporary gleams of ſympathy with ideal woe, and pity may thus be introduced into a mind where otherwiſe it had never entered—though probably as a ſtranger that tarrieth for a night. In order to accompliſh the *purification*, pity muſt deſcend from the imagination to the heart, from viſionary to real objects, and from feeling to action. "Waſh "ye, make ye clean," ſays Iſaiah, "relieve the "diſtreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the "widow, then your crimſon robe of cruelty and "oppreſſion ſhall become white"—the habit of your mind will be changed. 2. Alms purify the mind from ſuperſtition. The frivolous operations of waſhing plates, and waſhing hands, and disfiguring faces, are ſupplanted by works of mercy. On the mind of Chriſt ſuperſtition could take no hold, for he went about doing good, and in oppoſition to the prejudices of the

prieſts and of the people, he ſanctified the Sabbath by healing the ſick. 3. Conſcious beneficence tends to moderate the love of praiſe, of which, as appears from the context, the Phariſees were immoderately fond. "They loved the upper-"moſt ſeats in the ſynagogues and greetings in "the markets," having nothing within to which they could turn with comfort; but, "a good "man (one that doth good) ſhall be ſatisfied from "himſelf." 4. Alms purify the heart from ſenſual paſſions. 'The woman, (ſays Mary 'Wolſtencroft) who has dedicated a conſider-'able portion of her time to purſuits purely in-'tellectual, and whoſe affections have been ex-'erciſed by humane plans of uſefulneſs, muſt 'have more purity of mind as a natural conſe-'quence, than the ignorant beings whoſe time 'and thoughts have been occupied by gay plea-'ſures, or ſchemes to conquer hearts.' *Rights of women.*

Note

## Note B. Page 31.

FROM Sir John Sinclair's Statiſtical hiſtory it appears, that in many pariſhes of Scotland the wants of the poor are but ill ſupplied, and that the law which provides for them is not executed. One good effect of his patriotic publication may be to make that law better known, and (if found expedient) more generally executed. Some objections have been made to *poor laws*, the validity of which muſt be tried by facts.

1. *They weaken parental and filial affection, "the holieſt affections of humanity."*—Let the fact be fairly enquired into, and it will be found that many children labour hard to prevent their parents from receiving an aliment; and that children in good circumſtances, who ſuffer their parents to receive it, are infamous, a proof that the caſe is rare. During twenty-two years, in a pretty numerous pariſh where the poor are maintained by taxation, only one inſtance occurred of children refuſing to aſſiſt their parents; they forfeited the eſteem of their neighbours, and baniſhed themſelves to America. Affection, both parental and filial, is chilled by want: "the

"hind calveth and forſaketh her calf, becauſe "there is no graſs:" under the preſſure of poverty a mother may forſake her ſucking child: the child that is forſaken, ſent out to beg and to wander, or forced to labour prematurely, retains no affection for a deſtitute parent. It is by keeping the widow and her children together that mutual affections grow in their proper ſeaſon, and an aliment averts the chilling blaſt from the holieſt affections of humanity. By alimenting the aged, their poor children are delivered from a very painful ſympathy, or an utter forgetfulneſs of their father's houſe: they are thankful for a law which gives the neceſſaries of life to their parents; and by adding ſome comforts and cordials they teſtify and cheriſh filial love. The miniſter of a populous pariſh where there is no poor rate is diſtreſſed with the view of indigent miſery which he cannot relieve, and may be tempted to turn away his eye from beholding it; but under the benign influence of poor laws, he can enter the abodes of the wretched as the meſſenger of good tidings. The law which provides for the poor, inſtead of diſſolving, tends to ſtrengthen paſtoral and parental and filial love.

2. *Poor*

2. *Poor rates are ſubverſive of induſtry and charity.*—I can diſcern no relaxation of induſtry from the hope of an aliment: the aliment is ſo ſcanty and ſo humiliating, that it rather operates as a ſtanding admonition to be induſtrious and frugal. The able and idle, it is ſaid, get upon the roll. A pretty numerous roll of penſioners, whoſe caſes have for many years been under my eye, is made up of the old, the ſick, the widow, the orphan, the imbecil, the inſane. Inſtances are not infrequent of ſuch as recover ſtrength reſigning their penſions, of widows reſigning it as their children grow up, and of children reſuming the charge of their parents when Providence puts it in their power. If ever the tax extinguiſhes charity, it is in the cold hearted, from whom it extorts a uſeful though unwilling ſubſidy: but the love of many is not yet waxed cold: the enlightened Chriſtian knows, that what remains after paying public burdens is *his own*, to which the precept in the text applies, and out of which he devotes a proportion for alms-giving. Mutual ſympathy abounds among the lower ranks; their offerings at the church are liberal; and even vagrants, who are forced to wander from thoſe counties where the legal proviſion is withheld, find charity here.

3. *Poor*

3. *Poor rates prevent the common people from laying up againſt a time of need.*—The deſire of laying up is ſo ſtrong, that the poor rate has not yet, and probably never will extinguiſh it. A ſpirit of independance pervades the people, they feel the humiliation of receiving alms, they diſcern the difference betwixt having of their own and truſting to what is given. The poors rate is an inſurance againſt unforeſeen misfortune, and removes that anxious ſolicitude about what they ſhall eat and drink and put on, which the Goſpel has forbidden. If a legal proviſion for the poor ſhall ſomewhat abate the general and ſtrong deſire to lay up treaſures on earth, the effect is happy. View the poor man in his future deſtination, and whatever tends to alleviate mortal cares ſmoothes his way to immortality.

4. *When a tax for the poor is once impoſed it increaſes gradually.*—This, ſo far as it takes place, may be owing to two cauſes. Firſt, That ſome are induced, through falſe ſhame, to ſuffer extreme want rather than accept of an aliment. Second, That thoſe who appoint the aliments are at firſt too ſparing: the more frequently and attentively they conſider the caſe of the poor, they are diſpoſed to give the more. Let falſe ſhame

be

be combated, and the miſerable inſtructed in their rights. Let thoſe who have the management of the poor proceed, till every indigent perſon be found out, and their real wants ſupplied. When all that need have been perſuaded to aſk, and when thoſe who give have learned to give enough, the rate will become ſtationary. Till then it ought to riſe.

Lord KAMES *, after a very laboured argument againſt *poor laws* (which is moſtly againſt the abuſe of thoſe laws in England) adds, 'But 'if there muſt be ſuch a tax, I know of none leſs 'ſubverſive of induſtry and morals, than that 'eſtabliſhed in Scotland, obliging the Landholders 'in every pariſh to meet at ſtated times, in or-'der to provide a fund for the poor; but leaving 'the objects of their charity, and the meaſure, 'to their own humanity and diſcretion. In this 'plan, there is no encroachment on the natural 'duty of charity, but only that the minority muſt 'ſubmit to the judgment of the majority.' In thoſe parts of Scotland where this law is obeyed, the good effects are manifeſt. The poor are delivered from wandering under the infirmities of age, and their children from hopeleſs ignorance, idleneſs

* Sketches of the hiſtory of man, Book II. Sk. 10.

idleneſs and ſhameleſſneſs: they enjoy domeſtic comfort, and the fruits of their remaining ſtrength, without being obliged to overſtrain it: their children are educated under their own eye. The labourer foreſees a reſource in affliction, and on his death-bed liſtens with faith to the word of God, "Leave your fatherleſs children, I will "preſerve them alive, and let your widows truſt "in me." Thoſe who contribute have the honour to be fellow-workers together with God, they are the inſtruments of his mercy and truth. At ſtated times they ſpend a day together in conſidering the caſe of the poor: they then recogniſe a common parent, and ſympathiſe with their needy brethren; they mark the viciſſitudes of human life, and relieve a brother or ſiſter that is waxed poor, as knowing that it may hereafter be their own lot, or the lot of their children; they yield obedience to the goſpel precept of doing to others, as if placed in like circumſtances they would have others do to them. Having provided for the wants of fellow Chriſtians who dwell among them, they return to the comfortable enjoyment of ſuch things as they have; and abſent hereitors can uſe their good things more cheerfully, when they know that the poor on their eſtates have bread to eat. The rich and

the

the poor meet together in reciprocal ſentiments of kindneſs and of gratitude; and unite in attachment to a conſtitution whoſe laws are ſo conſonant to the Chriſtian law of love.

The law which provides for the indigent, may well be conſidered as a bulwark of the Britiſh Conſtitution. If it be endangered by invading the rights and immunities of the King and the nobles and proprietors of land, it is alſo endangered by invading or withholding the rights of the poor. Social order depends on rendering to all their due. The popularity of Payne's works was probably owing to his plans of benevolence, which carried the reader along, without enquiring who ſhould execute them. Were thoſe men who lately aſſumed the amiable name *Friends of the People* to become our law-givers, it is much to be feared that new poſſeſſors of wealth and power would not conſider the caſe of the poor; and if *poor laws* were found written in their code, it is yet much to be feared that they would not be forward to execute the law of mercy.

Note

## Note C. Page 31.

IF it be aſked, what proportion ſhould be devoted? I anſwer, 1. Worldly circumſtances are ſo various and ſo variable, and free-will is ſo eſſential to alms, that every one muſt fix his own proportion: he is thence obliged to think for himſelf on the ſubject, and to determine upon ſound and liberal principles what his own proportion ought to be. 2. Some hints occur in the Bible. By the law of Moſes the poor were entitled to a tithe every third year, which amounts to a thirtieth of the yearly produce. Jacob devoted a tenth. Zaccheus gave the half of his goods to the poor when he became a follower of Chriſt. 3. Attend to the practice of exemplary Chriſtians. Sir MATTHEW HALES gave the tenth of his precarious fees as a Lawyer. Mr BOYLE gave the third of a permanent revenue. THOMAS DAY, who proſecuted ſtudy in his youth, not to acquire the fame of learning, or to attain political diſtinction and influence, but to form rules for his own conduct, beſtowed the larger part of an ample revenue upon good works; abſtaining from the fine arts, and a fine place, and all other fineries, and even incurring the imputation of avarice

varice that he might ſo beſtow it. His mode of travelling was as ſimple and inexpenſive as poſſible; the reaſon he aſſigned for which was, that the leſs he ſpent upon himſelf, the more he could afford for the wants of others. His conduct was in a great meaſure conformable to that ſentiment of ROUSSEAU, 'Whilſt there is one of our fellow-'creatures who wants the neceſſaries of life, what 'virtuous man will riot in its ſuperfluities?' Examples are found in the higheſt and in the loweſt ranks, among the very rich and among the very poor: the firſt are led by conſcious power and elevated benevolence, and the laſt are influenced by a ſympathy that touches them near, to offer coſtly ſacrifices. The liberal proportions devoted by ſome who have many thouſands, and which are well known, convey a leſſon to thoſe who have many hundreds, and out of which, perhaps, they have not yet thought of devoting any fixed proportion to charity. The ſacrifices of the poor, though leſs known, are no leſs conſiderable and coſtly than thoſe of the rich. The maid ſervant who gives a weekly halfpenny to the offering, gives about a thirtieth of her yearly wages in alms; and if ſhe gives triple that ſum to her indigent relations, which is no unuſual caſe, ſhe gives about an eighth; if ſhe happens to

be a Seceder, what is given for the maintenance of a miniſter will probably bring it to a fifth; and all this is beſtowed, not from a revenue which ſhe has only the trouble of receiving and giving away, but from a revenue that is the fruit of her own conſtant labour, and the continuance of which depends on her health and employment; and this proportion is ſo ordinary in the lower ranks, and ſo little obſerved or known, that no account is made of it: there are ſome in the ſame claſs who beſtow one half of their wages in acts of kindneſs and compaſſion, and who abſtain from the ornaments that are become faſhionable that they may indulge benevolence. Were one who has a place or penſion of two thouſand, or even of two hundred a-year, to beſtow one half in good works, the effect would be conſpicuous, and the example would perhaps be conſidered as rare. Let the rich, in fixing their proportion of alms, conſider the example of poor Chriſtians. The poor who are charitable often come neareſt to the Chriſtian ſtandard; their proportion is uſually the largeſt, what they give is the fruit of their labour, and their praiſe is not of men but of GOD. 4. Suppoſe your riches were to flee away, and think what proportion you would then wiſh to have given, and what comfort Job derived

derived in ſuch a caſe from having given liberally. 5. Anticipate the hour of death, and adapt your proportion to the ſentiments of that hour.

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## Note D. Page 32.

BY moderating the taſte for newneſs, and fineneſs, and for what is merely ornamental, ſomewhat might be reſcued from dreſs to alms; and the ſtudy of what article may be ſpared, or purchaſed at a cheaper rate, or uſed a little longer, would gradually increaſe the fund. The diſuſe of hair-powder would add much to the general ſtock of proviſions, and it would add a little to the individual's fund for charity. A tax on ſilk, ſimilar to that on hair-powder, would promote the wealth and virtue of maid ſervants, and with the product (if not needed for Government) the duties on ſoap and leather might be alleviated. To ſaving upon Weſt Indian goods the heart is eaſily reconciled, and there are few articles where a little ſelf-denial among people of the middle rank would be more productive either for the purpoſe of juſtice or of alms. The expence of amuſements and entertainments among people of

higher rank might well be decimated for works of mercy. 'I prevailed upon Louis XVth (ſays 'Madam POMPADOUR) to change the object of the 'expence made for public rejoicing, by applying 'it to the increaſe of the human ſpecies, which 'luxury and debauchery conſtantly diminiſh in 'Paris. His Majeſty gave orders in conſequence 'that 600,000 livres, which were to be expend-'ed for fireworks, on account of the birth of the 'Duke of Burgundy, ſhould be divided into por-'tions among a certain number of young wo-'men to be married in the capitol.'

## Note E. Page 33.

WHEN one has a ſum which he is able and willing to give away, it is of conſequence to conſider and compare the different purpoſes for which it may be given, to diſtinguiſh betwixt oſtentation and better motives, and not blindly to follow faſhion. In proportion to the magnitude of the ſum this ſtudy is important. He might compare for example a play-houſe with a church, aſſembly-rooms with an infirmary, the walls of a college with means of inſtruction for thoſe who reſort

reſort to it. The founder of a claſs for agriculture is a greater benefactor to ſociety, than if he had beſtowed twice the ſum on pillars and porticos. There is ſtill room for ſimilar foundations. Theology, for the ſtudy of which colleges were firſt erected, is now leſs completely taught than medicine. The labours of one Profeſſor can reach little more than the doctrinal part, and little more is required or expected. A teacher of moral divinity, or of good works, would be a uſeful addition; the more ſo as the Profeſſor of moral philoſophy is likewiſe moſtly occupied in the ſcientific part. In an age of increaſing wealth and benevolence, a teacher of good works might be highly uſeful, to point out and direct their courſe; eſpecially if this claſs were attended by young gentlemen of all profeſſions. In the great walks of benevolence, clergymen of this church can do little more than exhort thoſe whom Providence has enabled to move in them: if ſuch as are thus favoured by Providence were early initiated in the doctrine of alms, and if this were a conſtituent part of their liberal education, a miniſter's exhortation to be rich in good works would be underſtood and reliſhed the more.

There is a progreſs in the art of deſtining what is given. Voyages of diſcovery were firſt undertaken for gain; they were afterwards proſecuted for the ſake of ſcience; motives of benevolence have ſince been added, and we admire the diſintereſted ardent zeal of Captain Cook to diſtribute valuable ſeeds and animals among the iſlands, when all that he did proſpered we rejoice with him. The temporal favours which he conferred may hereafter be followed by intellectual and moral bleſſings. Able aſtronomers and botaniſts and draughtſmen are ſent out to increaſe natural knowledge; able divines and moraliſts may hereafter be ſent to make obſervations on the minds of men, and to ſow the ſeeds of Religion and Morality. The willingneſs with which ſome young natives accompanied Captain Cook, and the reluctance with which they left him, ſuggeſt a ſcheme for qualifying ſome choſen youths from among the natives to become apoſtolic miſſionaries to their people.

Queſtions of general utility are ſometimes announced for diſcuſſion, with the promiſe of a prize. A queſtion of this kind might be, What is the beſt deſtination of a ſpecified ſum, or of two ſums ſuppoſe *L.* 100. and *L.* 500.? In diſcuſſing

cuſſing this queſtion, the comparative merit of uſeful inſtitutions might be conſidered, and new ones propoſed.—The difference betwixt a permanent and a temporal deſtination; whether, for example, it were better with *L.* 500. to give a liberal education to a young man of parts, or to found a burſary for the future aid of young men of contingent merit and capacity; or whether it were beſt to lay out the money in giving ordinary education and a trade to twelve ſons of poor men, or marriage-portions to as many of their daughters.—How the affections of the giver may be intereſted in the object of his beneficence, and in what different ways the virtue and capacity of his own mind may be beſt promoted by his gift. —Whether funds are apt to be miſmanaged in proportion to their magnitude, and if there be a riſque, when pious funds grow immenſe, of their falling into hands ambitious of wielding ſo great an engine for the purpoſe of oſtentation and patronage and power, and of their being taxed with nominal office-bearers, who do no part of the buſineſs, and who are not in want: if every charitable fund as it increaſes be ſubject to ſuch defalcations, and whether it be within the compaſs of human prudence to prevent it. 'Great gifts 'and magnificent foundations for public uſes '(ſays

'(ſays Lord BACON) are as ſacrifices without 'ſalt, and but the painted ſepulchre of alms, 'which will ſoon putrify and corrupt inwardly.' Small charitable funds are uſually managed with diſcretion, there being ſeldom any motive to adminiſter but benevolence, nor any motive to apply for them but preſſing want.—One who will take the trouble to be his own almoner bids faireſt to attain in the higheſt degree all the ends of alms-giving, both as a virtue which tends to humaniſe and purify his own mind, and as a ſource of conſolation to the miſerable. The man who has perſiſted in giving alms from principle and on a plan is moſt likely to throw light on the ſubject, and to gain the prize.

The deſtination as well as the proportion of alms muſt finally reſt with the giver. A young man, who freely gives away what money he has to ſpare, ſets out well. Though it be not always given for the moſt uſeful purpoſes, yet the habit of giving is acquired; and the art of deſtining it to uſeful purpoſes will be acquired in time, if it be ſtudied with care. Our Father in heaven knows our frame, and makes the ſame kind of allowance with an earthly parent who entruſts his child with a little money to diſtribute. If you conſult and gratify your own heart, though others

others blame, you have the woman for a pattern who broke a box of precious ointment, and was cenſured by the apoſtles, but approved by Chriſt, "Let her alone, ſhe hath done what ſhe could."

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## Note F. Page 36.

By confining your attention and ſtudy to one good work, 1. You come to underſtand it thoroughly, to intereſt yourſelf in the ſucceſs, and to promote it with ability perſeverance and zeal. The ſtudious man who reads and thinks and writes at random may be very knowing, but by proſecuting ſtudy with an aim he is more likely to excel, and to extend the boundary of knowledge; ſo the man who ſcatters alms is charitable, but by giving with an aim he is more likely to excel, and add to the ways and means of well-doing. 2. There is a new and conſtant motive to frugality and ſelf-denial. The zealous improver of waſte lands willingly denies himſelf, and grudges every ſhilling that is not caſt in a ditch: zeal to cultivate moral waſtes gives the mind a ſtill ſtronger bent, and the great Biſhop Berkley was willing to reſign wealth and honour

nour and ſociety in his native land, that he might enlighten and convert the heathen: objects that are ſmaller and more attainable give a ſimilar bent, and counterwork the tendency to epicurean ſloth. Thrift for the mere purpoſe of hoarding is not very dignified, but a benevolent object dignifies the moſt parſimonious attention to ſmall things. One, who has tried this ſyſtematic thrift for a year and found the proceeds, is apt to calculate with ſome regret, what a fund for benevolence the ſavings of more years might have yielded. This thought may be extended: many who are now in ſtraits, if they had what they have waſted, would be in none: people of all ranks in this country might riſe to independance by adding thrift to induſtry. 3. When ſome good work is carrying on or intended, you can bear the temporary imputation of avarice; and if your frugal old faſhions raiſe a laugh, you may join in it. 'It is leſs diſhonourable to 'abridge petty expences than ſtoop to petty gains.' 4. The proſecution of a good work within the compaſs of your intellectual powers and worldly means is a ſource of happineſs. Four girls of Lyons at the age of twelve formed a plan of beſtowing the preſents they received from friends, in clothing poor girls of their own age; they bought

bought coarſe ſtuff and ſowed it: this early communion of beneficence, which they enjoyed in ſecret, was at laſt diſcovered by the gratitude of thoſe who were the objects of it: their ſociety increaſed, and good works were multiplied *. MERCIER mentions a ſociety of Gentlemen at Paris, called *Octagenaire*, of eighty years old and upwards, whoſe object is to find out and cheriſh their poor coevals, and thus brighten the evening of their day. The heart muſt be intereſted in order to be bleſſed, and greatly intereſted to be greatly bleſſed. The affair of CALAS occupied the ſoul of VOLTAIRE upwards of three years, 'During all this time a ſmile has not eſcaped 'me, for which I have not reproached myſelf as 'for a crime.' It was the final reflection of this voluminous and illuſtrious author,

I'ai fait un peu de bien: céſt mon meilleur ouvrage.

In the zealous proſecution of a good work, ſome precautions are neceſſary. 1. Not to ruin yourſelf. The man who poſſeſſes what is to him an independance has received from Providence a temporal

* FROSSARD on Slavery, Vol. II. p. 300.—A book calculated to enlighten and to impreſs the ſtudent of humanity.

temporal bleſſing of the firſt magnitude: by the debt of gratitude which he owes to Providence, and by the duty which he owes to himſelf and his family, he is bound to preſerve it with all diligence: neither to public ſpirit, nor to private generoſity ſhould he raſhly reſign it. The coſtly building by which a man has deranged his affairs is uſually called his *folly;* and though the building were barracks or a church or an hoſpital, it is folly ſtill. 2. Be diſcreet in ſoliciting for your favourite charity. Others may have objects equally uſeful to which their alms are devoted; they may not be in circumſtances to give, and yet too facile to reſiſt importunity; they may come to mark and avoid you as impertinent and obtruſive; the *dames queteuſes*, or begging ladies in France are not reckoned the moſt agreeable company. It is the ſafe and deſirable courſe, at leaſt for a quiet man, to intereſt himſelf in ſome charity, which he can accompliſh without troubling other people. 3. Take care that meekneſs be not loſt in the ardent purſuit of charity. One is apt to overrate the good object upon which he has ſet his heart, and to reſent the oppoſition it may meet with from the ill natured and ſelfiſh, or from thoſe who have not the ſame conviction of its importance

and

and utility. The ſucceſs of a good work may depend on things without you, but the rule over your own ſpirit depends upon yourſelf. From oppoſition and final diſappointment, you may reap, if you will, meekneſs and humility, and theſe as well as alms are treaſures which a Chriſtian lays up for himſelf in heaven. 4. In proſecuting a favourite charity, one muſt guard againſt every thing like unfairneſs: againſt all miſrepreſentation of facts with a view to promote the charity: againſt accepting of any contribution in a favourable mood from one who will in all probability repent of having given it: againſt abuſing confidence and inattention, to betray one into a good deed, which perhaps it might be very proper for him to have done, but which he did not at all intend: againſt acquiring money to do good with by any indirection. It is of more conſequence that integrity and uprightneſs be maintained, than that good works be multiplied. 5. The deſire of money for indulging benevolence muſt be reſtrained and regulated. Your wiſe and kind deſtination of what you ſhall get hereafter is often a harmleſs and a happy dream: but if you grow impatient to have it realiſed, if you neglect the preſent by muſing on the future, if you regret the ſmallneſs

of your ability to do good; it is then meet, in the way of mental diſcipline, to reflect on your own inſignificance, and how many fitter inſtruments of good there are; on your ignorance of what is good for man, and in how many ways the diſappointment of human benevolence may accompliſh that which is divine; on your own proper work, ſo as not to waſte your time and thoughts on plans of benevolence without your ſphere. "Mercy *belongeth* to God." He diſpenſes it at the times, in the meaſure, and by the inſtruments that ſeem good in his ſight.

With theſe ſeveral precautions, it would be very uſeful and agreeable for a Chriſtian who has it in his power to intereſt himſelf in ſome favourite charity. It puts him in a poſture in which it has been reckoned deſirable to die. 'He who dies in ſome earneſt purſuit is like one 'wounded in hot blood, and ſcarcely feels the 'blow; whence to have the mind fixed and in-'tent upon ſome good object leſſens the pain of 'death.' BACON.

Note

## Note G. Page 42.

BUILDING cottages was a favourite charity of Mr HOWARD and his wife. The poor often feel houſe-rent a heavy burden, and the term of payment a term of much anxiety. Cottages rent free tend to lighten their minds, to diminiſh their cares, and to increaſe their happineſs by giving them the fruit of their labour *to eat*. Few charities of the ſame amount are calculated to yield ſuch permanent comfort, and to extinguiſh ſo much diſquietude. Rural ornaments to pleaſe the eye are ſometimes executed at great expence; houſes for the poor on an eſtate are a moral ornament which pleaſe the heart.

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## Note H. Page 48.

IT is the duty of one who receives a penſion, 1. To acknowledge Providence and cultivate piety. 2. To think with gratitude and devout interceſſion on the earthly benefactor. 3. To be humble. Pride and inſolence, and deſpiſing ſuch

as work for their bread, ill become thoſe who ſubſiſt on what is given them. 4. To be charitable. Were the penſioners of the Crown and ſuch as enjoy ſinecure places to exchange oſtentatious luxury for diffuſive benevolence, it would extend the royal bounty, and perhaps appeaſe the murmurs of the people. Smaller penſioners of rich individuals, who are frugal, and impart a little of what they have received to leſs fortunate and leſs favoured ſufferers, do honour to their beneſactor, and approve themſelves worthy of the gift.

## Note I. Page 57.

### SPECIMEN OF SUBJECTS.

1. *REASONS for believing that the Bible is the word of God.* Ignorance of thoſe reaſons is the ſource of infidelity. In Biſhop WATSON's collection of theological tracts, the argument is fully ſtated, and it were to be wiſhed that gentlemen would ſtudy it there; but for thoſe who have not money and literature and leiſure, a a cheap

a cheap plain ſolid book on the ſubject is needed.

2. *The internal evidence of Chriſtianity.*—Its correſpondence with the beſt conceptions of God and of Providence, with the ſenſe of right and wrong, and with the forebodings of a future retribution—its peculiar ſuitableneſs to the guilt and fears and wants and ſorrows of men—the condeſcenſion with which its doctrines and precepts and pattern are given, and its conſolations opened. Theſe are evidences of a divine origin, which reach conviction to the underſtanding and to the heart. The ſubject, if too large for one hand, might be divided. The Biſhop, who ſhould aſſign to his clergy the compoſition of ſuch works, according to their inclination and capacity, would recommend the *dioceſan form* more effectually than by arguments drawn from the Fathers.

3. *On the attributes of God.* The ſubject has been often and ably treated in the way of argument. It would ſtill be uſeful to bring down the moſt obvious and convincing arguments to the level of ordinary readers, and to be copious in the devout ſentiments which the ſeveral per-

fections of God inſpire. The ſtudy of ſuch a work is a preſervative againſt the extremes of enthuſiaſm and ſuperſtition; it gives exerciſe to the higheſt powers of the underſtanding, and to the beſt affections of the heart: the ſoul leaves the world and its cares, aſcends above the clouds of controverſy, and returns unto its reſt.

4. *On Chriſt's example.* There is no queſtion on the ſubject in our *church catechiſm*, which makes it the more neceſſary to draw attention to it in ſome other way, a whole catechiſm on the example of Chriſt would be a uſeful addition to our ſtandards.

5. A catechiſm on the practice of juſtice, mercy, and truth.

6. A hiſtory of the church of Scotland, in which truth is reſpected, praiſe and blame impartially diſpenſed, and views of Providence opened, might have the ſame kind of effect on the inhabitants of Scotland that the Old Teſtament hiſtory had on the Children of Iſrael.

7. *On diviſions.* The current of reaſoning from the Reformation downwards has been on the

the lawfulneſs, the obligation, and the merit of ſeparating upon juſt grounds. The common people of Scotland are often ſolicited to ſeparate from the church, and they too often decide upon hearing and conſidering only one ſide of the argument; let them be furniſhed with means of conſidering the other ſide, that in a ſtep ſo important they may exerciſe their right of private judgment impartially. Let advices be offered concerning the proper ſentiments and behaviour toward thoſe who ſeparate. Let comfort be given to thoſe who ſeriouſly lament diviſions; by opening the deſigns of Providence, the accompliſhment of prophecy, the advancement of knowledge, the enlargement of charity, the future union and peace of the church.

8. *Lives of exemplary private Chriſtians.* Biography has pervaded ſtateſmen and ſoldiers and authors: by extending it to Chriſtians who have been diſtinguiſhed for piety and domeſtic virtue and uſefulneſs in their neighbourhood, *they* would receive their portion of honour, and thoſe who are deſtined to move in the ſame humble ſphere might be influenced by their example.

9. An

9. An enumeration of good works and alms-deeds within the reach of the middle and lower ranks: the reading them over might put the well diſpoſed upon doing ſome of them.

10. An enumeration of common frauds, with an expoſition of their guilt. The reports of the Commiſſioners on public accounts and of the Eaſt India committee are works of this kind in the higher ſpheres of life, calculated to elucidate moral principles, to promote reformation, to inſtruct and warn the ſervants of the public, and perhaps make the guilty aſhamed. MERCIER deſcribes the fraudulent combinations of building tradeſmen at Paris, and the labyrinth into which they lead the builder: it may at leaſt ſerve for a caution to thoſe who propoſe to build.

11. On the relation of neighbourhood. Characters of a good and of a bad neighbour. ANTONINUS dedicated a temple to *the goddeſs of good turns*. Inſtances given. Occaſions of doing them to be ſeized and ſought. The temper from whence they flow, and how to cultivate it.

12. Relative duties of Landlord and Tenant. 'The relation of maſter and tenant, like prince

'and

'and people, implies a reciprocal duty, and mu-
'tual affection.—Beneficence to tenants is the
'beſt privilege of landed property.'

13. Duties and temptations of a ſoldier—moral limits of military obedience.

14. Duties and conſolations of a day-labourer.

15. A Book for maid ſervants, containing familiar inſtruction on their temper and conduct. The importance of dreſſing frugally, as a mean of juſtice, of kindneſs to their parents, and of laying up for the time to come. The great difference betwixt a woman advancing in life, who has laid up part of her yearly wages, and one who has ſpent the whole.

16. On thrift. A minute circumſtantial detail of the ways and means of being thrifty.

17. On the temper with which pecuniary loſs ſhould be born.—The moral and pious uſes.

18. A book for widows.

19. On the miniſtry of conſolation, to direct and

and aſſiſt Chriſtians in comforting one another. It was a wiſe and kind thought of Dr ERSKINE to publiſh *conſolatory letters*, written under the impulſe of ſympathy and of ſorrow. Were the plan extended to all the ordinary caſes of affliction, it would be a uſeful volume for the houſe of mourning.

20. On the choice of a profeſſion. To young men it is often a ſubject of anxious deliberation, upon which they need advice, and (unleſs they be preſumptuous and ſelf-willed in an unuſual degree) are diſpoſed to liſten. Biſhop SANDERSON's ſermon on this ſubject is a precious fruit of his talent for caſuiſtry, and contains the ſeeds of the propoſed treatiſe.

21. Caſes relating to alms diſcuſſed.—The caſe of giving to beggars.—Offerings at church—the manner of giving—the love of praiſe as a motive—the promiſe of temporal bleſſings as a motive—how far and in what ſenſe alms are expiatory—duty of thoſe who receive alms.

As ſtile and manner in every ſpecies of compoſition are now very much attended to, I ſhall add ſome reflections on the ſtile and manner of addreſſes

addreſſes to the poor, and of books written for their inſtruction.

In ſuch compoſitions it is not neceſſary to be very obſervant of the principles and rules of rhetoric. The ſtile deſigned by rhetoricians, *familiar, vulgar, low*, is preciſely the ſtile which poor people uſe the moſt, which they underſtand the beſt, and which they are diſpoſed to approve and reliſh. An author who uſes it muſt forego the reputation of a fine writer, but he may attain a higher, that of extenſive uſefulneſs.

The difference ſhould be attended to betwixt books calculated to pleaſe, and books calculated to inſtruct. For the firſt, good models are ſtudied, and elements of criticiſm, and all the innocent arts of pleaſing; for the ſecond, the arts of explaining, of convincing, of converting, and of conſoling, are the moſt neceſſary. Manner is chiefly to be attended to in the firſt, and matter in the laſt. Nothing muſt enter the former that offends imagination; into the latter circumſtances are admitted at which it revolts, leaving reaſon and the heart to ponder. *The orator*, ſays D'ALEMBERT, *ſacrifices harmony when he wants to ſtrike by things, juſtneſs when he wants to attract*

*tract by expreſſion.* This may be a good rule for the Academy, where beauty and pleaſure are the objects; but the ſacred orator will never make the laſt of theſe ſacrifices, and the firſt he will not account a ſacrifice.

To be plain, and memorable, and earneſt, are the chief requiſites in a practical treatiſe.

1. Labour is well beſtowed in making the truths and laws of Religion plain; and they only who have tried to inſtruct the ignorant, know how much labour it requires; and how many ſacrifices in doing it the man of taſte muſt offer; blunting the edge of his wit, dropping the graces of compoſition, breaking his large round period in pieces, making vulgar ſimiles, and uſing words which ſhock the critic; when the labour of explanation is accompliſhed, the merit of the labourer does not appear, and credit is ſeldom given him for his pains and his ſacrifices.

2. Proverbs and maxims and ſtories, real or allegorical, aſſiſt the memory. The wiſeſt preacher of antiquity ſpake in proverbs: Chriſt delivered his longeſt ſermon in maxims, and uſed many parables. If it be ſaid that this ſuited

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an infant ſtate of morals, it is to be remembered, that in reſpect of moral knowledge the people are yet in a ſtate of infancy: learned and laboured works are meat for ſtrong men, but inſtructing the people is giving milk to babes.

3. Earneſtneſs ſuperſedes the uſe of ornaments and declines them. In entering a cottage to give counſel and comfort, your fine clothes and fine language would diſconcert rather than ingratiate. A familiar ſerious earneſt manner is enough. RICHARD BAXTER often introduces in his writings ſuch objections and doubts and temptations and fears as had been propoſed to him in private, and anſwers them as he did to the propoſer. This gives to his ſtile a character of truth and life and earneſtneſs. The ſtile of an earneſt conference about the duties and trials of life, though proſcribed by the critics as colloquial, ſeems well adapted to religious inſtruction; it tends to rectify an erroneous notion of the dignity of the pulpit; it is doing for the goſpel what SOCRATES did for philoſophy, bringing it from the clouds to the earth, from the region of fancy to the abode of conſcience, from hidden myſteries to the the affairs of men; it is transforming it from a theatre of eloquence into a rule of life.

'The object of religious inſtruction,' ſays a great Philoſopher, 'is not ſo much to render peo-'ple good citizens of this world, as to prepare 'them for another and a better world in a life 'to come.' This is a heavy charge againſt the teachers; it ſuppoſes extreme ignorance of Chriſtianity, which is ſo well calculated to render the people good citizens of this world; ignorance of the proper preparation for the life to come, which is to be good citizens in the preſent life; and ignorance of that connection which God has eſtabliſhed and which Chriſt has illuſtrated and aſcertained betwixt virtue here and happineſs hereafter. We truſt that the Philoſophers, when they have done us the juſtice to hear what we teach, will form a different judgement of our religious inſtruction.

## Note K. Page 61.

IN a very good little book aſcribed to Mr WILBERFORCE is the following paſſage. 'I never 'hear a charity ſtory begun to be related in 'mixed company, that I do not tremble for the 'cataſtrophe, leſt it ſhould exhibit ſome morti-'fying diſappointment, which may deter the in-

'experienced

'experienced from running any generous hazard, 'and excite harſh ſuſpicions, at an age when it 'is leſs diſhonourable to meet with a few caſual 'hurts and tranſient injuries, than to go caſed in 'the cumberſome and impenetrable armour of 'diſtruſt. The liberal ſhould be particularly 'cautious how they furniſh the avaricious with 'creditable pretences for ſaving their money, as 'all the inſtances of the mortifications of the hu-'mane are added to the armoury of the covetous 'man's arguments, and produced as defenſive 'weapons, upon every freſh attack upon his 'heart or his purſe.' *Thoughts on the manners of the great*, p. 70. 7th edition.

I have not the ſame fear with this author when a charity ſtory is begun in company. 1. Becauſe the cauſe of charity is ſo often triumphant, that there is at leaſt an equal chance of a happy cataſtrophe. 2. Though it ſhould be otherwiſe, the young will ſympathiſe with the plan and the motive, as they did with Mr WILBERFORCE when the vote on the ſlave trade went againſt him. 3. Becauſe the hiſtory of an unſucceſsful experiment, in morals as well as in phyſics, adds to the ſtock of knowledge, and leads to future ſucceſs. 4. The argument which miſers derive

from the mortifications of the humane is only one ſymptom more of a diſeaſe that is incurable.

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## Note L. Page 65.

THE Quakers, who claim by ſo many titles to be forerunners of Meſſiah's kingdom, 1. Emancipate their own ſlaves. 2. Exclude from their community ſuch as are concerned in the ſlave trade. 3. Abſtain from thoſe commodities that are produced by ſlavery. The firſt and ſecond part of their example it would be deemed chimerical as yet to propoſe; the third and ſlighteſt may be conſidered. A wiſh for the abolition has been expreſſed pretty generally: were all who have expreſſed that wiſh to abſtain from, or even to abridge the uſe of Weſt Indian commodities, it would diminiſh the ſlave trade. The petitioners might thus co-operate with the Legiſlature, and pave the way. It would at leaſt be a proof of their own ſincerity. Great revolutions, in the cauſe of truth and liberty and mercy, are effectuated by the co-operation of thouſands, and to one of a public mind it is an animating

animating thought, that he has it in his power in any way to co-operate. To one who has felt for the miſery of ſlaves, it is conſoling by an act of ſelf-denial to teſtify compaſſion; and the zeal may well be queſtioned which withholds ſo ſlight a ſacrifice. Abſtinence from luxuries produced by the labour of ſlaves is a teſtimony *not in word but in deed.*

The following propoſal was offered to the Society at Edinburgh for abolition of the ſlave trade.

"To purchaſe a number of the moſt promiſing young ſlaves, either from African traders or from harſh maſters, with a view, 1. To make them free; which, if the ſcheme went no farther, would at leaſt diminiſh the ſum total of ſlavery and its attendant miſeries in the world. 2. To give them education ſuited to their capacities, and ſo enable them further to avail themſelves of their reſtored liberty. 3. To give theological education to a few of the beſt qualified, ſome of whom might hereafter become miſſionaries in Africa. Though the trade ſhould be aboliſhed in Britain, which is yet doubtful, this would be a proper ſequel to the abolition. It

would tend further to convince the Negroes that there are white men in the world of different diſpoſitions from thoſe which they have hitherto ſeen and felt. It would be the beginning of a reparation for the wrongs they have ſuffered, for aboliſhing the trade is only ceaſing to do evil. It would be a ſtep in the progreſs toward that period when all men ſhall be free. In the mean time, the execution of ſuch a plan would occupy many free men in active benevolence.

"For raiſing the neceſſary fund, a voluntary contribution might be tried; and if the ſcheme be thought worth proſecuting, application ſhould be made to the General Aſſembly and to all the ſectaries to appoint a collection. The publiſhing and recommending it from pulpits would draw attention to the ſubject. It would awaken humanity, and tacitly reprove every domeſtic violation of it among ourſelves. It would teach the value, and cheriſh the love of liberty. In the heart of every contributor to ranſom ſlaves, a generous ſpark would kindle. Even if the attempt were at preſent confined to Scotland, and the few ſlaves that could be purchaſed brought hither for inſtruction, under the direction of your

your ſociety, it would be an exemplary beginning."

It is glad news to the Chriſtian, that an act for emancipating ſlaves has paſſed in America, and ſhe now utters her conjuration to every Chriſtian country where the ſlave trade ſtill exiſts.——"By all the attributes of the Deity which are offended by this inhuman traffic. By the union of our whole ſpecies in a common anceſtor, and by all the obligations which reſult from it. By the apprehenſion and terrour of the righteous vengeance of God in national judgments. By the certainty of the great and awful day of retribution. By the efficacy of the prayers of good men, which would only inſult the majeſty of heaven, if offered up in behalf of our country, while the iniquity we deplore continues among us. By the ſanctity of the Chriſtian name. By the pleaſures of domeſtic connections, and the pangs which attend their diſſolution. By the captivity and ſufferings of our brethren in Algiers, which ſeem to be intended by divine Providence to awaken us to a ſenſe of the injuſtice and cruelty of dooming our African brethren to perpetual ſlavery and miſery. By a regard to conſiſtency of principle and

and conduct, which ſhould mark the citizens of a republic. By the magnitude and intenſeneſs of our deſires to promote the happineſs of thoſe millions of intelligent beings who will probably cover this immenſe continent with rational life. And by every other conſideration that Religion, Reaſon, policy, and humanity can ſuggeſt."—

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## Note M. Page 76.

MR PALEY propoſes the following diſtinction on this ſubject. 'When our bounty is *beyond* 'our fortune or ſtation, that is, when it is more 'than could be expected from us, our charity 'ſhould be private, if privacy be practicable; 'when it is not more than might be expected, 'it may be public.' *Moral and Political Philoſophy*, Book III. part 2d, chap. 5th.

The following reaſons occur for making it public, at leaſt for not ſtudiouſly concealing it, even where the hope of imitation is ſmall. 1. By the light of extraordinary benevolence ſhining before men God is glorified, for it is the reflection

flection of his image. 2. There is pleasure in the contemplation of high generosity; the knowledge of Christ's, though inimitable, tends to elevate and expand the heart. Our knowledge of what apostles and martyrs and primitive Christians did, and of what some Christians do in every age, teach us the height to which human benevolence can rise. The member of parliament, who asked at whose expence Mr HOWARD had visited so many prisons, probably learned for the first time, that there was a man in the world capable of doing it at his own expence. 3. Particular situations and feelings sometimes prompt unusual efforts of charity; and it is both comfortable and instructive for such as are in similar situations to know what others in their case have felt and done. 4. The knowledge of many charities above the usual standard tends gradually to elevate that standard. The general practice is the rule with most; they have no notion of doing more than others, and do not chuse to fall far behind them. A nobleman will shew the same kindness to his tenants, and attention to the poor on his estate, and care for his needy kindred, and encouragement of modest merit, that other noblemen shew: a merchant will not be behind other merchants in tenderness

neſs for an unfortunate bankrupt: the mechanic will be neighbour like in giving *a caſt of his craft* to fatherleſs children. The kind and degree of charity uſually celebrated in newſpapers will be uſual. When more liberal and extended and perſevering acts of beneficence are generally known, faſhion will point to a higher ſtandard. It may hereafter become the faſhion to conſider alms-giving, not as an occaſional effort, or an imitative habit, or the reſult of a tranſient ſympathy; but as a Chriſtian duty, for the judicious habitual practice of which ſome ſtudy is requiſite. Readers, who propoſe this ſtudy to themſelves, will find hints for proſecuting it in the preceding pages. As active benevolence advances, abler teachers will ariſe; and what BACON ſays of invention will hold in morals as well as phyſics. *The art of invention will grow up with inventions themſelves.*

FINIS.

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*BY THE SAME AUTHOR,*

1. A Volume of Sermons, ſecond edition.

2. On the duty of making a Teſtament.

3. On the Revolution.

*Page* 69. *line* 9. *for* good, *read* god.

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